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NEW STATESMAN

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Problems of a Strong Personality

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The Case Against Import Controls

There is an inherent weakness in British politics that seems to prevent specific policies from ever matching the hour that requires them. The last decades have resounded to the dismal thud of doors slamming on vacant stables. So if and when we do get our very own version of protectionism – which looks increasingly like the next policy resort but one – it will probably be too late to catch even the short-term benefits that such a strategy is said to bring. Had the idea not formed part of the cluster of policies collectively known as the 'alternative strategy', it would almost certainly have been made part of the new orthodoxy before now.

Not long ago, the left-wing challenger for the leadership of the Steelworkers Union in the United States was asked to declare his policy on restricting Japanese steel imports. He replied that he could see no virtue in using American labour as a lobby to increase unemployment in Japan, and added that the wasteful and incompetent policy of the steel corporation was the real problem. Mr Sadlowski had a point. Not only are import controls an insular – almost at times a chauvinist – policy; they also involve the real danger of masking the actual problem and suggesting a false solution. The long battle in this country to protect cotton and jute from foreign competition was not just a failure in itself. As Bill Brand discovered during his fictionalised Calvary as a left-wing Labour MP, it also involved a somewhat callous attitude to the millworkers of Bengal. Socialists, at least, should not confuse the enticements of an isolated statist policy with the dawn of a rationally planned economy.

The British economy at present does not display any very rational features of organisation and production. Neither the unit cost of a Leyland car, nor its virtues as a vehicle, really entitle it to any kind of special treatment. And at least one of the import control proposals, which is simply to make Japanese cars more expensive, hardly recommends itself to those who believe in equality of sacrifice. Even this is to understate the socialist attitude to consumers, which can scarcely be one of compelling them to buy inferior cars at inflated prices in order to maintain a sort of subsidised syndicalism at Longbridge.

Rather as in the case of the Common Market argument – the last political 'triumph' of the nationalist Left and its dubious allies – some socialists now find themselves in uncomfortable occupation of a stretch of abandoned Conservative terrain. Long after Toryism had ditched the Empire, sentimental union leaders could be found to appear on the same platform as Powellites and argue for a policy of 'alone, facing the open seas'. Now the ideas of Joseph Chamberlain are given a new resonance by Tony Benn. It will be a serious defeat for the Left if it becomes identified with the cause of all that is backward and inward-looking in British industry and society. Our competitors are working with newer and better machinery than we are. Their productivity is immensely greater. Their trade unions are more industrially organised, and make a better job of avoiding the craft-based hangovers of our Industrial Revolution. Import controls might have been designed to insulate British productive capacity from the need to adapt in this way. Certainly they are powerfully supported wherever industry is inefficient and antiquated. In this context, the slogan of 'Buy British' is as reactionary as it sounds.

At least, in its 'alternative strategy' guise, the import control argument is intended to answer the questions posed by Britain's appalling level of unemployment. The true sense of the word 'appalling' in this case relates to the fact that our unemployment is increasingly *structural*, and not susceptible of quick reformist solutions. What is required on the employment front, and on other fronts as well, is a strategy for social ownership and public enterprise. The obstacle to that strategy at the moment, apart from the political orthodoxy of the cabinet, is the deeply conservative character of British industry. It is difficult to see how the panacea of protectionism will do anything except reinforce that. Indeed, many supporters of the policy argue for it openly on the grounds that it is capitalism's last chance. It may well be that: but it is not a solution for socialists.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Mrs Thatcher's Chill Wind

The characteristic idiocy of the present Labour Government is summed up in one of Denis Healey's favourite sayings: 'We may look pretty ridiculous in Mrs Thatcher's clothes,' says the Blob, 'but she's going to look even more ridiculous with no clothes at all.' As we have seen in the last couple of weeks, there is no question of Thatcher running out of clothes. Nor is there any question – before the next election – of her running out of friends in high places, friends for instance in the national press, friends who write the headlines such as 'Maggie's Got It Right!' The *Mail*'s NOP poll, which gave an 11-per-cent lead to the Tories on Monday, may well be something of a hiccup, and may well be based on too small a sample for confidence. It may well be significant that immigration is still not considered the most important issue of the day, and Labour may well take comfort from their lead in popularity on such questions as prices and industrial relations. But the fact remains that, with a simple, elegantly unscrupulous move, the old bag has taken the initiative; and if she's done it once she can do it again.

Viewed from the press gallery, the Prime Minister's response on Tuesday seemed cunning and appropriate. I do not believe, by the way, that Callaghan was 'more or less thinking on his feet'. It was clear from the triumphant nodding smirk of the Home Secretary that he at least knew what was coming. The net was being laid in the sight of the bird. Very well, said Callaghan, you are right to be concerned about immigration; I too am deeply concerned about it; if you're so concerned, let's all get together, you, me, David, the Home Secretary, the Shadow Home Secretary and Reggie Maudling (!), and let's work out a common policy. (And of course, if you say yes, you will lose the party advantage; whereas if you say no, I shall be able to go round forever after accusing you of being deliberately divisive. Heh, heh, heh.)

As I say, it looked rather good. It went down well with Labour – but only, I suppose, because it was never taken seriously as a proposition: imagine what the Left's reaction would be to a *serious* suggestion that policy on immigration should be decided between the party leaders. And it proved irritating to the Tories. Nor did Thatcher have a ready response to make. One came away thinking: clever old Jim, elder statesman, manages these things so well. In the cold light of Wednesday morning, however, it was difficult to see the Callaghan move as anything more than a debating trick. And it is surely improbable that tricks of this kind have much lasting effect.

Another source of comfort for Labour in the past few days has been the performance of Ted Heath. This was not uncharacteristic: when one thinks of Heath's record over Powell, his immediate sacking of him in 1968 and his readiness always to speak out against Powellism, it was not surprising that there should have been some reaction. The trouble was that the terms in which Heath chose to make his case are part of a much broader campaign, and one with rather less chance of success than either Thatcher's or Callaghan's. That is – the campaign by Heath in every speech and public appearance since he lost the Tory leadership (apart from those strictly commercial efforts at self-promotion) to rehabilitate the Heath Government.

Listening to Heath, one might imagine that the Tory administration of 1970-74 had been a paradigm of enlightened reform. The question of immigration was settled. Europe was settled. Local government was settled. Devolution was settled. Wise counsels prevailed throughout the land. The economy was in the hands of a genius. The arts flourished. There was a golden age, an age beside which the Rome of Augustus, the Florence of Lorenzo the Magnificent, the London of the Swinging Sixties all paled into insignificance. One might imagine that harmony and concord had been the key themes of the age.

And if one imagined such things, one might feel that if the question of immigration was settled by the 1971 Act, then it is somewhat tedious of Thatcher to bring it up again. If on the other hand one were not convinced by the Heath view of the Heath age, if one had even a dim recollection that the Heath administration was nasty, brutish and far too long, and if, furthermore, one was the type of person who thought immigration to be a serious problem – what would one's reaction to Heath's remarks be? It astonished me that so many Tories, and Tory journalists in particular, have felt that Heath, by ditching the chances of a reconciliation with Thatcher, has done grave damage to the cause. On the contrary, he has merely pointed up a distinction between himself and his successor – he is satisfied, she is not – which she is at liberty to use to her advantage.

It is true that there have been attempts by the Thatcher camp to build up the possibility of a reconciliation with Heath. These attempts were set back when the Thatcher circle leaked the story of Ted's private meeting with Maggie – and did so, to Heath's fury, while the old boy was off on yet another foreign jaunt. But the time is fast approaching when this urge for a reconciliation will seem quite beside the point. It is on a par, as a political argument, with the view that the Tory front bench lacks experience/glamour/debating skills/famous figures. The Tory front bench does not need these things. All it needs, in the last resort, is the will to play dirty. This is precisely the kind of quality that the Tories found so attractive in Maggie when they chose her as leader.

For Callaghan to reply to monetarism with monetarism may have seemed quite bright. To reply to racism with the call, 'Look, let's get together and have a chat about this,' is hardly inspiring. David Steel may rise to his feet (but fail to catch the Speaker's eye) to say that he would be prepared for informal fireside natters. But if Thatcher refuses to take the issue out of politics, in politics it remains. Nor can Callaghan's sage and solemn act be protracted for ever. The mere fact that the Tories have played the racialist card now, rather than nearer to the election, surely indicates that they are not short of other issues to exploit. For instance, the future course of the Rhodesian dispute is within the Government's control; it is hardly likely that all is about to go smoothly; and it is hardly likely that, if all goes badly, the Tories will feel obliged to remain out of the argument. Indeed since the end of the Malta talks they have been shaping up nicely for a scrap. All the indications are that the young Winston is keen to do to Owen what his crazed granny reportedly did to the Graham Sutherland. The press, we may be sure, will be ready to cart the remains off to the incinerator.

On Ulster, too, with the abandonment of power-sharing (another of those Heath success-stories), the Tories have manoeuvred themselves into a position where they can exploit whatever electoral advantages may be available. Enoch Powell's seat may be in danger, but Enoch Powell's support seems within their grasp. Finally, on law and order there is always ample scope for campaigning. It really does not matter what ostensible cause is chosen – a murderer is paroled and goes off on a spree: Labour can always be blamed for not keeping its murderers under control. Such issues can be conjured up *ex nihilo*. They do not need much fanning. However much inflation falls, however the figures for the economy improve (and we have seen this week how little reliance can be placed on that prospect), however many clothes Healey imagines he has stolen, Labour must always fear the booby-traps of irrationality. It is time the Government stopped placating its unreasonable opponents.

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Murray Sayle

Resisting the Japanese Invasion

When the provisional results of the 1977 World Trade Test went up last month, only a glance was needed to spot the winning team. It was not the one captained by the United States, which managed an all-time record trade deficit of $267,000m., the biggest item of which was $421,000m. to Arabs and others in the Middle East for oil, less arms sales to the same customers. Britain was, as usual, heavily in deficit on visible trade, but just about broke even with a good year in invisibles and the first of the North Sea oil. West Germany and Japan, without a drop of oil between them, rang up trade surpluses of $17,000m apiece.

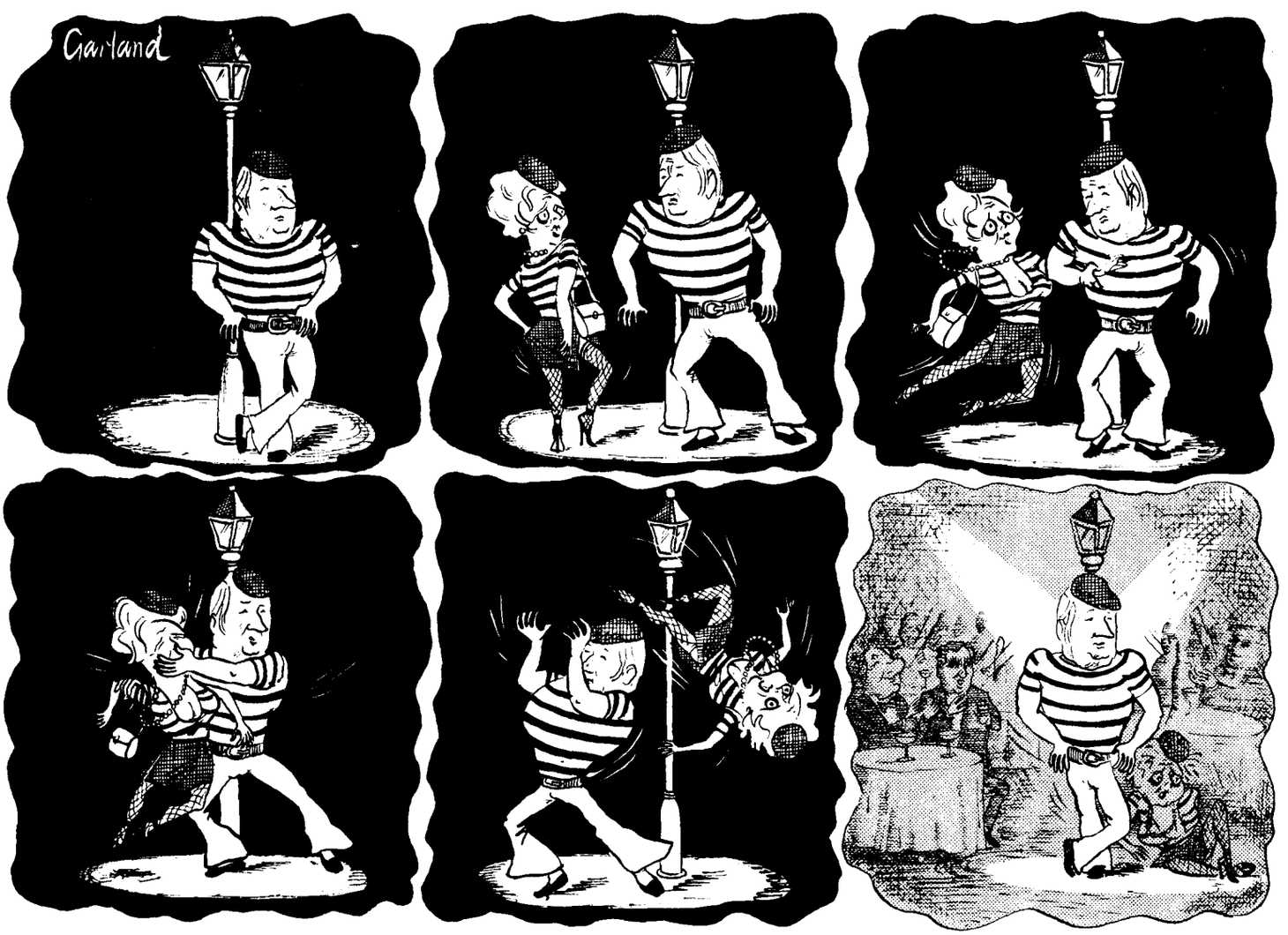
Some individual scores make the picture even clearer. The West Germans spent $14m. on capital transfers and a lot of invisibles (no sizeable merchant fleet of their own, the need for insurance, and all those German tourists) and finished the year $3,000m. ahead of the game. The Japanese stayed home and achieved their best-ever current account surplus, $110,500m. In some of the playoffs, Japan managed a visible surplus with the United States of $81,000m., with the EEC of £55,000m., with Britain of £597m. and, in the toughly contested final round, Japan scored a $1,000m. surplus over fancied West Germany in direct, toe-to-toe deliveries.

With all this, by practising prudent pay-as-you-burn, the frugal Japanese managed to meet their own 1977 oil bill of $25,000m. to the last dinar, without selling a single gun. The scrapper from the East has taken the industrial exporting title again, but seems understandably bashful about accepting the applause: there are 17 million out of work in the countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, officially only 1.1 million of them Japanese (which is 2 per cent of the labour force, still a Japanese post-war record).

At first glance, there seems to be some kind of rough correlation between size of deficit and number of unemployed. Are we playing a zero-sum game, in which we lose if Japan wins? This theory seems to take two separate, but related, forms:
(1) Japanese exporters, either by cutting costs to the bone or dumping – if these practices, one worthy, the other reprehensible, can in fact be distinguished – are picking off vulnerable industries like home electronics in the US or cars in Britain.
(2) By sneaky tariffs, and even sneakier non-tariff barriers, the Japanese authorities are denying a home market hungry for Western goods the chance to buy them and thus make more work for us all (except, perhaps a few cheating Japanese).

In my own view, argument (1) has some truth in it, and we'd be doing the same, if we could make anything cheap enough to dump, and argument (2) is at least four or five years out of date, and even then Japanese diabolical cleverness was always exaggerated, and bureaucratic nit-picking and procrastination not sufficiently taken into account. However, crude anti-Japanese views are undoubtedly gaining ground. 'A closed door for a closed door' thundered George Meany, the veteran American trade union boss last month, meanly forgetting his own critical role in getting cheap Japanese products into the US in the first place, back in the Fifties when battling communism seemed more important than saving American jobs.

Japanese manufacturers are certainly uneasy about the threat of more anti-Japanese protectionist moves – viz. their refusal last week of Britain's plea to them to freeze 1978 car exports at last year's levels. The news came as UK registration figures for January were issued, showing that Datsun now comes third in the sales league, easily outselling Chrysler and Vauxhall. Including



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Colt and Honda, this means that the total Japanese share of the market was 13 per cent, compared to 7.6 per cent in January of last year.

Is there a racist tinge to the heat which is being applied to Japan? 'We are getting the usual preliminary barrage of stories portraying Japan as Fu Manchu with a briefcase, backed by a computerised anthill', complains the Tokyo business commentator George Murakami, but he goes on to acknowledge that the Japanese themselves may be as much the cause as the victims.

Batman to Robin

To begin with, Japanese visible exports are highly visible. The export drive is concentrated in a few narrow, sharp-ended fronts, carefully prepared on the home market and then launched overseas like a Banzai charge. If anything is more conspicuous than a motor-car, it's a television set, especially one with the maker's name lit up under the screen. By contrast, who (apart from laundrymen and lechers) knows that a West German firm is the world's biggest exporter of ladies' underwear?

Not only is the West German export drive broader-based and more discreet, but their home market is undoubtedly easier than Japan's for other European manufacturers (they're in the EEC, and that's the idea). Americans, however, complain that they sell even less cars and kitchen *kitsch* in Germany than they do in Japan, about one every second blue moon. If the Germans are, in addition, getting a special *entrée* as white folks – let every *Volkswagenfahrer* search his conscience. But there is no doubt that, racist or just resentful, the heat is on Japan. The Fukuda government has appointed a special English-speaking minister to deal with the problem, Nobuhiko Ushiba, a tough, wily old bird who is famous among Japanese diplomats for his capework in dealing with indignant Anglo-Saxons (he was Ambassador in Washington during some of the hairier Nixon years). In a little over a month, Ushiba has been to Washington; the US Special Trade Negotiator, Robert Strauss, has been to Tokyo; Ushiba has been to Bonn, Brussels, Paris and London, and talked to all the big men there; and he is now back in Tokyo, getting ready for the GATT talks in Geneva and yet another world economic summit which will probably be staged in Bonn in June.

Ushiba has been working very close to the horns in this hectic period. At first, the Americans came on strong, as protector to protégé, or Batman to Robin, and demanded that Japan get into bilateral balance within 18 months. By the time Strauss left Washington he was only saying that he was 'dissatisfied' with the Japanese offer. After two days in Tokyo Strauss announced 'a dramatic breakthrough. It's a change of direction and a new philosophy for Japan', although he did add, 'We're not carrying back 17 million or even 17 thousand jobs'. Strauss's 'dramatic breakthrough' is worth some study. It contains one hard set of figures. Japan is going to increase its tight agricultural quotas by 10,000 tons of 'hotel-grade beef', 4,000 tons of orange juice and 45,000 tons of oranges. Beyond this picnic lunch Japan 'intends' to attain 7 per cent economic growth in 1978, get the global trade surplus down to $6,000m. this year and 'aim at bilateral equilibrium, or even deficit, in 1979'.

Hmmmmm. As starters, the beef and orange juice are definite promises, a point I cleared up with Ambassador Ushiba himself. But don't try your luck with any Aberdeen Angus or Wagga Wagga Hereford: 'hotel beef' means *American* beef, and the same for the orange juice. It works out, if I can trust my Japanese calculator, at 3.2 oranges and one hamburger per Japanese per year, an indulgence hardly likely to get the balky world economy blasting off again.

It might do Strauss some good, however. He hails from Texas, where the longhorns roam the range, right next to Florida, where they're up to their ass in oranges. A former chairman of the Democratic Party, he is credited with putting together Jimmy Carter's victory, and believed in Tokyo to be the Carter associate with the most influence with Congress. That is an interesting example of the business technique known in Japan as the *puruzento*, or doing a favour where it will do the most good.

What about the 7 per cent growth and the sharply falling surpluses? Everyone from Prime Minister Fukuda and Ambassador Ushiba down has made it all too clear that these are expressions of intent, good intentions, not the pledged word of Japanese gentlemen. Fukuda's political rival, Masayoshi Ohira, said that the 7 per cent was an 'international pledge', the idea being that if it fails to materialise, Fukuda has to take the blame and resign, making Ohira Prime Minister. Fukuda saw that one before it bounced and acidly explained last week that the 7 per cent (which, in theory, will stimulate Japanese to buy more imports, or more *anything*, and thus help us all out) was merely a 'domestic target'.

'Accounting Error'

Well, there's the 'historic breakthrough'. It does bear a certain resemblance to Prime Minister Fukuda's crowd-pleasing undertaking in London in May last year that Japan would attain a 6.7 per cent growth rate and a $700m. deficit, which turned out to be just over 5 per cent growth and $110,500m. surplus – an 'accounting error', said Fukuda, and we shouldn't just dismiss this explanation. It's a mad world, the Japanese economy no longer responds to the customary carrots and sticks, and the figures are getting very big: $618,100m. imports into Japan last year, $793,000m. exports. Just the same, the 'historic breakthrough', the 'change of direction and a new philosophy for Japan' can only mean one thing: *this time they mean it*.

This was the message that Ambassador Ushiba brought to Bonn, Brussels, London and Paris. Working even closer to the horns, he explained that there was no beef or oranges for Europe, no *puruzentos*, nothing at all, in fact, except a share of the good intentions offered to the Americans. Unemployment in Europe, he said, was caused by having too many guest workers (he has also told the Americans they have too many blacks and Latinos, without, however, advising them how to solve the problem). But, he said, he had high hopes of the important-stimulating 7 per cent growth being attained.

How? The trick, Ushiba explained, will be turned by the current Japanese budget, which provides for 37 per cent deficit financing, in place of 30 per cent last year – classical Keynesian pump-priming finally hitting the Orient, except that this is more of an eye-dropper than a pump. Unless Ushiba and Fukuda know something that Japanese bankers and economists don't know, their 7 per cent is unattainable. In Japan the Government only spends 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the GNP, and an extra 7 per cent of 20 per cent is (click, click, click) less than 2 per cent of the GNP to prime the pump, which is nice for the construction companies (heavy contributors to political funds) who are supposed to get the public works contracts, but hardly likely to convince ordinary Japanese that good times are here again. Japanese at the moment are saving 25 per cent of their disposable income, the highest rate in the world. Tokyo typists have, on average, £1,600 in the bank each, and it's not for their bottom drawers, but in case they lose their jobs.

No Vast Market

The reasons for pessimism are clear enough. The Japanese ship-order book, 37 million tons at the time of the oil shock, is down to 8.5 million tons, and was beaten out on price for 12 freighters by a South Korean yard the other day – an ominous sign of things to come. Silk, which only the rich Japanese can afford to wear, and only the poor can afford to grow, is in a parlous state, and Japan has had to plead for 'voluntary restraint' by China and South Korea to save an uneconomic, moribund, vote-intensive industry, just like the ones we have at home. The successful Japanese export industries, it is generally agreed, will roar on because they are the only bright spot in the economy, so there is no relief in sight for the Birmingham and Detroit car men from that quarter. But there *is* no vast market inside Japan waiting, as things stand, for Western manufacturers to come flooding in when the barriers are lowered. There are, in fact, no substantial non-agricultural barriers any more, not of the kind the weak and squabbling Government can do much about, anyway.

Selling things to Japan is actually fairly easy, *provided* you can offer products useful in the Japanese home, or in industry, at a price so low that Japanese trading companies can import them, make a large profit, and still undercut the competing Japanese article on price. The Japanese textile industry is being steadily wiped out in this manner by imports from Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea right now. But Europe and the US have nothing to offer that cheap any more.

So Japanese business is gloomy about prospects, and ordinary people unenthusiastic about Western manufactured imports. The Nomura Research Institute, for example, sees a maximum growth rate this year of 4.6 per cent, and a current account trade surplus of $9,000m., a fair sample of non-official Japanese thinking. Why, then do

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Fukuda-San and Ushiba-San issue their rosy 'promises', 'forecasts', 'domestic targets' or whatever they may be?

'Do not disobey the Prince' advises an old Chinese saying. 'Cheat him.' This puts the matter with rather unoriental bluntness, but it has certainly never been a part of any Eastern system of etiquette to call a spade a spade, let the chips fall where they may, or tell the truth and shame the Devil. Rather, the Confucian gentleman tells you what you want to hear, assures you of his good intentions, and indicates by a graceful phrase that, due to circumstances beyond his control . . .

One way, surefire way, of lifting Japan out of recession we can do without. In the parallel situation of 1931, a massive rearmament programme with 25 per cent of the GNP going on weapons really got the wheels spinning again. Many Japanese manufacturers look wistfully at the arms trade, the only export industry with limitless growth prospects, and Japanese trainers, patrol planes and other non-offensive equipment have lately been offered for export – a British purchasing mission had the secret joy of telling Mitsubishi that their flying-boat was interesting, but too expensive, and the delivery times were too long.

Japan's 180,000-man army is too small a home market for effective arms development, and the Japanese people who won't spend their money on foreign imports have even less enthusiasm for spending it on home produced guns, remembering their disastrous return on that kind of investment last time. Slowing down growth from 10 per cent to 5 is as diseorienting a shock as slowing from 5 to zero, and the Japanese government and its emissaries are probably telling the truth when they say that they are doing all they can, within the severe limits of their graft-ridden political system. We are not likely to get much out of them this year, or next, except more polite promises.

Tokyo

Patrick Wintour

Will Chapple See the Light?

There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats
For I am arm'd so strong in honesty
That they pass me by as the idle wind
Which I respect not

In the last two months Frank Chapple has put on a brave performance as Cassius. Over and above his statutory 'totally unacceptable' response to the Electricity Council's first offer, Chapple warned the Council to 'gird its loins for trouble' after 15 February. He went on to threaten that dissatisfied power workers could collectively return Britain to the Stone Age and that the firemen's strike would appear like a granny's picnic by comparison with what his men would serve up. Though in public the Government have appeared suitably smug in the face of all this 'idle wind', in private they have made massive contingency plans and regard the threats as serious.

At a 22 December Chequers meeting on pay Denis Healey admitted you could stretch the troops so far and no further. But in the event of a power workers' strike it is not so much a shortage of army numbers but of the expertise that is the worry – a few mistakes and untold damage could be inflicted on the National Grid. A full strike would eventually lead not just to darkness and cold but also to no water supply, the destruction of food in cold store and, ironically enough, the failure of computers normally used to pay out supplementary benefits for those on strike. In brief, the power workers' strength is so great they cannot strike. Nevertheless, as last November's work-to-rule demonstrated, electricity supply can suffer all manner of disruption without every power station switch being turned off. Yet it is hard to see how both the power workers and the Treasury's guidelines can be satisfied.

The loose card in the pack is the emotional Frank Chapple. For all his anti-communist credentials and the autocratic union structure he has built since the purge of the communists from the EEPTU, Chapple is not his own man over this pay claim. During the unofficial dispute in November Chapple disappeared to Ireland and refused to be dragged into the affair. In an attempt to reassert his authority he explained on his return that he had been waiting for March and the official negotiations to push his members' claim. He now has to deliver. The unofficial shop stewards' movement, though a chaotic organisation, is considering reviving the old Electricity Supply Association as the Electrical Workers Association designed exclusively to represent their interests. The case of the Ferrybridge Six who were sacked for refusing to join one of the four manual unions in the power industry (the GMWU, T&G, EEPTU and AUEW) still rankles. Many workers feel they are not represented by their traditional unions, not just in terms of wages but in a wider sense. A GMWU turbine driver at Drax, for example, might have to drive for 15 minutes to attend the nearest branch meeting only to find they are talking about dustmen. It is not a forum for his industry in any sense. It does not help either that Chapple has more than halved the number of local EEPTU branches.

'But how are we to hang them if we don't let them in?'

The epicentre of the rebel movement is the chain of large 2,000 megawatt power stations in South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire (by the Trent river and sources of cheap coal) which in terms of output dominate the other 137 stations. Communication and solidarity is made easier here (unlike the really remote stations such as Pembroke) and they were able to organise flying pickets in November as far afield as Blyth in Northumberland. Nevertheless the leadership is highly changeable. Unlike the miners they are not protected by a homogeneous community yet they are easily recognisable. During November's power cuts some shop stewards were spat at in supermarkets, unable to get service at petrol stations, had their wives insulted and their gardens trampled on by ITN camera crews. To be ostracised by your own community is a chastening experience. Nevertheless the present spokesman for the unofficial movement, Ernie Davidson, is quietly adamant. A member of his constituency Labour Party executive, he explained:

> We're not after the Government. We're just frustrated people. Men are leaving the industry all the time because they're not being paid. Do you ever read the local papers? Well in ours there is an advertisement for an office cleaner to polish floors. Wages – £40 a week plus two supplements yet I get paid after seven years apprenticeship just £45 plus two supplements. I think some of our union leaders are after knighthoods, the way they have let us down in the past three years.

So annoyed were they by their leadership that one of their demands as a precondition for returning to normal working in November was that the shop stewards should receive formal negotiating rights during the present pay claims. They didn't succeed in that – but those who led last November's unofficial action still continue to meet in the Trades and Labour Club in Doncaster, where this Saturday they will be carefully monitoring any agreement reached between the Electricity Council and the union's official leadership.

It is no coincidence that it is in Yorkshire, South Wales and Nottinghamshire that the powermen are most angry. Since 70 per cent of the coal is shipped to the stations there is a feeling that they are subsidising the negotiating successes of the miners, many of whom live, gallingly, in subsidised homes close by with subsidised home coal, subsidised bus services to work and early retirement. It is for this reason that Chapple has placed so much emphasis on winning travel allowances, better shift payments, concessionary electricity prices.

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Joe Ashton who knows the shop stewards, many of whom are his constituents, believes that if the Council would only offer cheap electricity much else could be settled.

One of the problems in the negotiations is that the unions seven years ago sold the pass on productivity for a mere £7 without having any 'escalator' built into the scheme. Clause 202 of the national agreement gives the management great flexibility to move labour from job to job and grade to grade according to immediate requirements and without the normal demarcation problems. That last autumn's work-to-rule rapidly led to power cuts was ample proof of how tightly manned the industry is. In the last ten years the blue-collar labour force has decreased from 41,000 to 31,000 while the number of power station employees per megawatt has fallen by 52.9 per cent. In other words we are so efficient at producing electricity at the moment that it will be difficult to devise a productivity scheme like that worked out for the miners.

If something is patched together the Treasury, the other loose card, would be well advised to stay quiet. If Chapple and his negotiating team deliver only 10 per cent there will be some kind of backlash and this time John Lyons's Electrical Power Engineers Association will not be there to help out. They have their own claim in to maintain their white-collar status and they made themselves very unpopular by manning the stations in November. The deadline for the annual settlement is 17 March. The omens for the Ides of March do not look propitious.

John Palmer

The Brussels Bad Boys

The habit of sniping at the messenger because you do not like the tidings he bears is proving catching in the Common Market. Britain is once again in the firing line. This is, in part, because the Commission and, even more, some of the other member states dislike London's refusal to 'get fell in line' on such sensitive issues as fishing policy and farm prices. Much more, it is because they do not appreciate the message which David Owen, and other UK ministers, have broadcast about the changes which have occurred, and the even greater changes which will have to occur, in the Community itself.

This message was summed up by the Foreign Secretary when he addressed a dinner of the Brussels Labour Club, an assembly of the Euro-faithful if there ever was one, earlier this month. 'Federalism', he said is out. The future, he made clear, lies with an association of sovereign states not so different from that envisaged in earlier years by General de Gaulle and President Pompidou. Dr Owen said that the enlargement of the Community from nine to 12 members, with the accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal, was an inescapable political obligation to the still vulnerable parliamentary regimes in Athens, Lisbon and Madrid. But enlargement, he emphasised, would mean a looser, in many ways even less ambitious and less interventionist, Community in the future.

Owen was not above having a crack at what he believes to be the political pretentions of the Commission in Brussels, and its uneasy President, his former party colleague, Roy Jenkins. The Commission, he said, is still 'frozen' in the attitudes and practices of a past and outdated vision of the Common Market. For good measure he ridiculed Roy Jenkins's favourite notion that the only way out of Western Europe's economic crisis, is if national governments recognise the need to hand over power for key economic decisions, above all management of a common currency, to Brussels.

The Foreign Secretary's neo-Gaullist picture of a Common Market which moves essentially at the pace of the most sceptical and nationally self-conscious member state, was calculated to enrage the European Unionists. In essence, Owen was building on the thesis put forward by Mr Callaghan in his famous letter to the Labour Party executive before the last party conference. And in this sense the doctrine of 'confederalism', as Owen has dubbed it, is meant to serve the obvious party point of muzzling the anti-Market awkward squad who still query received wisdom about the benefits of EEC membership. Certainly the more the Labour leadership are attacked in Brussels and elsewhere as irredeemable nationalists and profoundly *unCommunitaire,* the more difficult it is for the Labour Common Market Safeguards Committee to mount any kind of rearguard action for withdrawal from the EEC.

But if the Owen/Callaghan doctrine on the future balance of power within the EEC between national governments and the Community institutions were a matter of mere party manoeuvre, it would not have aroused such excoriation. The simple truth is that the EEC is moving in the direction that the British Labour leaders have described. None of the Nine is really willing to transfer sovereignty to Brussels on the scale needed to make the Market more than a confederation of sovereign states. Jenkins's call for a single EEC currency and control of monetary policy in Brussels has not been backed by a single government. Some, perhaps a majority, of the existing Community pay lip service to the ultimate goal of an 'economic and monetary union' but none is ready to move beyond a snail's pace – and only then on condition that the national governments, rather than the Commission, keep their fingers on any relevant triggers.

The Community of the Nine is, then, different in practice from the Community of the Six. Unfortunately no one until now has sought to bring theory and practice into line with each other. There is a kind of theory of a Federal Europe. But there is nothing, beyond mere description, about a Confederal Europe. The tilt to de facto confederalism is bound to be increased with the addition of Greece, Spain and Portugal. Which is why some in Brussels and elsewhere are determined to close the door once Greece is safely inside – in about a year's time. A Europe of the Ten could just about pick out the federalist irons from the European fire. In a Europe of the Twelve – with Spain and Portugal – the federalists would not stand a chance.

It is precisely this danger of a stop to enlargement after Greek entry that has prompted the British Government's recent foray into the unlikely waters of European constitutional and political philosophy. Owen and Callaghan have a shrewd suspicion that not only in Britain, but elsewhere in Europe, a looser Community – one less obsessed with integration and harmonisation – would have considerable appeal. This accounts for the vigour with which the British Government is being attacked at present by those in the EEC who do not welcome the facts of life being pointed out. There is much talk of the narrow-minded nationalism of British negotiating objectives in the Community. British ministers, notably John Silkin, are denounced in Brussels with bell, book and candle as dyed-in-the-wool anti-Europeans. It is true that on most questions British ministers have regard, first and foremost, for what they see as vital national interests. They will not willingly hand over the British fishing industry to a 'Common Fisheries Policy' which does not include credible measures to prevent overfishing in British offshore waters. The British *did* fight to keep their contribution to the EEC budget to a minimum while taking as full advantage as possible of any EEC goodies available from the regional, farm and social funds. The British *did* insist that a British laboratory be given the prestigious contract to build the thermonuclear JEI project rather than a laboratory in West Germany which already had many such EEC projects.

It is also true that British 'national' interest and commonsense coincide to some extent over farming policy. It does make sense that any income increases in future should be given to relatively efficient (mainly UK) farmers and not spread across the board at the expense of the consumer. The West Germans who uphold the rigours of free market rewards in most other matters take exception to its application in this area. The explanation may lie in the profusion of inefficient but politically influential farming votes in southern Germany.

The British do behave, then, in a 'nationalistic' way. But so do all the others – on matters large and small. The others tend to do so behind a smokescreen of Europeanist rhetoric. The British have not discovered a 'confederal' rhetoric which rises above the complacently nationalist. Certainly no thought has been given to anything remotely resembling a 'socialist' European perspective. Given the character and traditions of Western Europe's social democratic leaders, that is hardly a source for wonder. But the absence of such perspectives on the Left, at a time of mass unemployment, of deep crisis in the economic system and a certain paralysis in the political system, is as surprising as it is disturbing.

Brussels

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Daisy Schwarz

Zambia: Faltering on the Frontline

The other day a bomb went off at 1 a.m. in the offices of the *Times of Zambia*. As the editor and his staff were at home in bed and the newspaper is printed several hundred miles away in the Copperbelt town of Ndola, this interference with the People's Paper (the *Times* is majority owned by Zambia's only political party, UNIP) did little more than blow up a few typewriters, cause a traffic jam next morning in Lusaka's main thoroughfare, and set off considerable speculation as to the culprits. A prominent UNIP official reacted by publicly blaming 'enemies of the revolution'. This piece of meaningless polemic was as near as the reading public got to any official pronouncement on the subject.

Speculation is one of the few commodities in Zambia that is not in short supply just now. The country is weighed down by economic ills, and there are a thousand scapegoats to hand – rockbottom copper prices, Zairean smugglers, South African agents, congestion at the port of Dar es Salaam – each jostling for the number one culpability spot. But still leading the field is the intractable Rhodesian situation across the border in Zambia's ex-Siamese twin, her colonial other half. There was an obvious candidate for blame over that bomb at the *Times of Zambia*: ZAPU.

This is the one Rhodesian liberation movement in exile to which Zambia gives official favour and hospitality – and the one whose bases the Rhodesians most regularly attack. ZAPU's President, Joshua Nkomo, is close to Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, who is apt to stick out his neck on behalf of his old friend rather further than his other presidential colleagues from the so-called frontline states would like. There had been a recent altercation between the *Times* and ZAPU, leading to various ignominious retractions and reluctant apologies from the liberation movement. Was the placing of the bomb a reprisal? Or was it, on the other hand, a piece of stage management by others interested in fomenting anti-ZAPU feeling?

There exists already plenty of anti-ZAPU feeling in the country. According to the UN Commissioner for Refugees, there are around 50,000 Rhodesians now in Zambia, and there is some bitterness among ordinary Zambians about footing the bill for their needs. Then, too, many people lay the blame for the country's current malaise on the severing in the post-UDI years of the country's umbilical cord to Rhodesia. In this they are doing no more than toeing the line of Zambia's official propagandists, who repeatedly emphasise the high price Zambia has paid for her principled stand in support of UN sanctions against the rebel regime in Salisbury.

Unfortunately, the Ministry of Information has not been entirely successful in persuading everyone that such belt-tightening consequences of the 1973 border closure are actually good for the soul. It is very unpatriotic to say so, but many Zambians contemplating rising prices, falling job opportunities, and shortages of cooking oil, feel that an 'accommodation' along the lines of a Malawi with white southern neighbours would have kept their standard of living at a more comfortable level.

Of course, strictly speaking, they are right. Ever since January 1973, the only traffic in and out of Rhodesia has been the occasional train shunted on to the Victoria Falls bridge in the middle of the night and left there for onward transit to Zaire. One or two trucks may not quite complete their journey, but the cessation of trade has been virtually total. The cost to Zambia has been prodigious. The latest figure from the UN co-ordinator of special assistance to Zambia is a grand total of $750m. There is also the invisible cost of the leadership's persistent diversion from home affairs to the political machinations connected with southern liberation.

Shortage of consumer goods has landed the country with an inflation rate of over 20 per cent. The results daily confront the average citizen in shop windows and on supermarket shelves, which are a good deal emptier, far less attractive and more pricey than they used to be. Post-Independence Zambians, weaned on a diet of high-quality imported sweetmeats, look down from their hideous $40 Italian-made platform shoes and turn up their noses at Chinese baked beans and Zambian washing-up liquid.

For Zambia is one of the most urbanised, consumerised, materially-conscious countries in the whole of Africa. The social economy has been skewed and distorted by its legacy from colonial days: the hegemony of King Copper. The mines demanded white managers and cheap black labour, and the measures that supplied both created on the one hand a highly affluent elite, curtained off in their own segregated end of town, and, on the other, the sprawling townships of aspirant slum-dwellers. It would have been a miracle if copper-wealthy Zambia had managed to stop in its social tracks at Independence and remove the smell of luxury from the nostrils of those to whom fell the task of running the country. It didn't.

Kaunda, an exemplary and exceptional leader by most standards, has undoubtedly done his best. His progressive and equalising ideals have long been held up as the country's credo. But however often the tenets of his political philosophy of humanism – a softer version of Tanzania's *ujamaa* socialism – are repeated, and however often their genuinely loved leader calls for a return to the simple farming life, Zambians want blue jeans and teeshirts, bottled beer and Fanta orange, hamburgers and Dairyland ice-cream. No fewer than 10 per cent of them live in the urban areas, and they are the vocal political group. Many would like the Victoria Falls rail bridge to carry a great deal more traffic than at present. Some say so publicly. There are political leaders, notably Elijah Mudenda (Prime Minister till July last year) who have lost their jobs for 'subverting economic policies'.

The main wrench for landlocked Zambia, reliant on copper exports and consumer imports, has been to re-orient northwards her economic flow. The success story has been the opening of the TAZARA railway, connecting the Zambian rail network to Dar es Salaam on the Indian Ocean. Built by the Chinese and opened two years ahead of schedule in October 1975, its need became yet more critical when the Angolan war shut the other rail outlet to Lobito on the Atlantic coast. TAZARA carries nearly 60 per cent of the country's trade. But even this arterial life-support system is now threatened by cardiac palpitations.

In a surprise move on 16 January, the Tanzanian Minister of Transport announced that the special cheap storage rates in Dar port that Zambian cargo had enjoyed since UDI were about to be withdrawn. If the threat is carried out, the additional bill for Zambian freight will come to over $1m. every six months. It seems that Zambia's oldest ally, her erstwhile staunch supporter President Nyerere of Tanzania, has decided on a cooling of relations.

More speculation immediately ensued in Lusaka. The problem between the two countries must surely relate to Kaunda's recent independent line on Rhodesia, his

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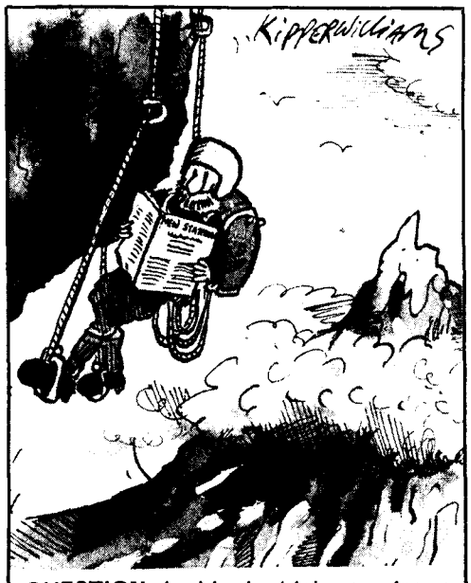
refusal to back the Anglo-American proposal for elections *before* independence in Zimbabwe. We are back full circle to ZAPU, to Nkomo, which will it seems lead the ordinary Zambian into ever more price hikes and food shortages.

The bomb that shattered the interior of the *Times of Zambia*'s offices in the early hours of 14 January was timed too late to catch the morning editions. Instead, they headlined the latest of Zambia's campaigns, launched by the Minister of Information. Entitled 'Live Simply, Eat Zambian Dish', citizens were exhorted to lay off tinned carrots and frozen peas and eat instead the traditional *nshima* and relish – maizemeal porridge and meat or vegetable sauce. The campaign was quickly picked up by other public figures, calling vigorously for an end to foreign exchange extravaganzas such as caviar and snails on restaurant menus, and by a television film of people tucking into platefuls of *nshima*.



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The campaign came hard on the heels of Kaunda's speech opening Parliament, in which much was made of the Economic Take-Off decreed by UNIP for 1978, which is another way of saying that party and government mean business when they talk of austerity ahead. It was part of a well-orchestrated attempt to prepare the ground for some nasty shocks in the forthcoming budget.

The trouble is – and it is not just a problem for Zambia, but for everyone with an eye on southern liberation – that she is completely unable to balance her books. Her copper-bottomed economy is on the verge of collapse, and while the situation on *vis á vis* the Rhodesian border has something to do with it, the principal reason is her failure since independence to dethrone King Copper and make agriculture instead her economic base. Copper, that most fickle of metals, has suffered dramatically from the post-OPEC world recession, and having once made Zambia's fortune, is now in the process of ruining her.

Ever since Independence there has been a more or less determined effort to reduce dependence on the mining sector. But even as recently as 1974, 52 per cent of government revenue came from the mines, a contribution of $529m. By 1976, it was down to $8m. Now it is zero, and the mines are reported to be running at a loss. According to the Minister of Finance John Mwanakatwe, who introduced the dreaded budget on 27 January, the balance of payments deficit for 1977 was $300m., a worse record by 50 per cent than 1976.

This is election year and President Kaunda must be biting his fingernails. Some of the budget provisions cannot fail to be politically unpopular, especially the end of subsidies on maize meal, which means an overnight price rise of 21.6 per cent; The last time this was tried, in early 1976, the outcry from the urban and mining workers was such that the subsidies were reintroduced shortly afterwards.

This time, their disappearance is surely here to stay. What alternative is there? In 1976 the currency – the kwacha – was devalued by 20 per cent and pegged to IMF Special Drawing Rights. There was an initial $46m. standby credit from the IMF, but it has not been followed up because IMF stipulations, up to now, have not been met. The balance of payments now looks almost as chronic as it did in 1975, the year that copper prices plunged. But now most of the classic remedial gambits have been played.

If it is in the towns that the pinch is hardest, it is also there that the crippled state of the economy is most obvious, outside the shops as well as in. Concrete white elephants adorn the Lusaka skyline, half-finished high-rise buildings waiting for roofing and glazing – everything except cement, the one locally-produced component in the ailing construction industry. Spare parts for vehicles are so hard to come by that many of the cars on the Cairo Road are driven round with windscreens cracked and splintered and irreplaceable. The general hospital in Kitwe, Zambia's second largest city, is without even one fully-commissioned ambulance in working order. In such a large country with such a scattered population, this inability to reach the people is grinding development to a standstill.

According to senior aid officials, there is simply no room these days for any new programmes or pioneering ventures. The Government has no counterpart funds, and the existing infrastructure is unable to absorb or manage the kind of new projects bilateral donors with their proprietory instincts, like to fund. The problem over the next couple of years will simply be to keep existing services running.

It is the social services which are bearing the brunt of economic misfortune. The proportion of total spending on health dropped from over 12 per cent of expenditure in 1971 to 9 per cent in 1976. The more enlightened multilateral donors – UNICEF for example, over 80 per cent of whose aid goes on mother and child health care – have faced up to the reality of Zambia's predicament. Under a special assistance programme, UNICEF is effectively meeting part of the Health Ministry's current budget, providing essentials like training, transport, drugs and vaccines.

Most of the aid giants – World Bank and UN – are engaged in supporting the belated attempts of Zambia to capitalise on her greatest natural wealth, not copper but agriculture. It has become a cliché to lament the failure to promote food and cash crops in the immediate post-Independence years. Zambian leaders freely admit that talk was not backed up by appropriate policies. But in the past two years necessity has wrought what expediency dictated. The image of farming life, so despised by Zambia's urban sophisticates, has been given a boost, as have the profits to be gained from it. Production costs have been kept down, and producer prices raised. The results have been encouraging. Maize production in the traditional sector – not the white settler barons who have always done well – has risen by 30 per cent, making the country an exporter in this part of Africa.

The latest budget may unfortunately put a dent in that success story too. NAMBOARD, the state-backed agricultural marketing board, reported a loss for last year of over $9.2m. So now the subsidies on fertiliser have been scrapped, raising the price by 26.9 per cent. Economic Take-Off for 1978 is beginning to look more like a pious hope than a realistic possibility. It will take more than a statement of commitment to economic growth, productivity employment, and control of inflation to get Zambia off its knees.

A quick settlement in Zimbabwe could yet hold the key. If ZAPU could go home, if the border could re-open, if there was a cheap alternative to TAZARA, if . . . if . . . President Kaunda might yet be able to relax after 13 years of post-UDI tension and allow Zambia to nurse her wounds and wind up gradually her exhausted economy. Out there on the frontline of black Africa facing south, it is getting lonelier and more uncomfortable by the day. Election year is going to be crucial. With torrential rains falling out of a grey and gloomy Lusaka sky, it has not begun any too happily for Zambia's people. Everyone whose eyes are on events in southern Africa must hope that 'living simply' and coping with austerity will have their due reward.

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Morris Fraser*

Child Pornography

'Stop this child corruption . . .' 'Stop these evil men . . .' 'public outrage . . .' 'growing menace . . .' 'Action at last . . .' 'Evil men on the run . . .' Put another way, Mr Cyril Townsend's Protection of Children Bill has now received an unopposed second reading and may soon become law. Scarcely anyone will quarrel with the Bill's overt purpose, but before the Committee Stage there is time to stop and wonder how many of the estimated half-million people who petitioned 'to stop the exploitation of children for sexual purposes' had any notion of the quite extraordinary complexity of the issue. A number of elements within the phenomenon now termed 'child porn' have so far been overlooked, both by the lobbyists of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association and also by the 'liberation' groups, and are ripe for examination now.

First, there is the distinctly thought-provoking fact that the reported fortunes of the porn-merchants would not have been amassed without a very sizeable readership. Who are they? If the Bill becomes law is it supposed that they will be cured of their addiction or at any rate, somehow, just go away? Or, if possession is indeed to be made an offence, are they all to be put in some vast new prison? No – any profitable discussion on child porn must begin from an inquiry into the nature of paedophilia in general, and then into the function that pornography serves for the inverted adult.

A paedophile is generally defined as an adult person who is sexually attracted to an immature child of either sex. In legal terms this means a juvenile below the statutory 'age of consent', not necessarily the same thing. The major schools of psychiatry differ on the origins of paedophilia, and it is often not recognised as an entity at all, but a good place from which to begin is Freud's *Essay on Leonardo* of 1909, not least because of the present context. 'The paedophile has had an emotionally unsatisfying childhood; he has been unloved by his parents and as a result his libido has turned back narcissistically on the only love-object remaining – himself. As he grows older he can no longer love the child he was then, as this child no longer exists, so he has to project on to other children, who from then on become his prime love-objects.' But he remains above all a narcissist, and the origin of his deviance is often clearly visible in the work of artists and writers with a paedophilic interest. He is, for example, Peter Pan fascinated by his shadow, Alice before her looking-glass, Dorian Gray captive to his self-portrait. Both Lewis Carroll and J. M. Barrie took nude photographs of their child acquaintances; passing over the question of whether both are now to be stigmatised as 'vile' and their works banned, we can now perhaps begin to see why child photography forms a central part of the paedophilic condition.

But why *nude* photographs? This takes us directly to the Freudian concept of 'erogenous zones' and their relationship to lost love in childhood. How are these zones first defined? A young child quickly learns that his mother gives much more attention to some bodily areas than others, i.e. to the genital areas in the processes of toileting and cleaning, and a powerful link is formed between these areas and the prime sensations of bodily pleasure in later life. Viewing, uncovering or handling of these erogenous zones is, for a paedophile, going to be one of the main ways in which, via projection, he will try and revive his contact with the sensation of being loved and in which he is going to receive greatest physical pleasure.

This 'viewing' aspect relates directly to pornography – something not so difficult to define as is often supposed. A pornographic book, Polsey has said, is a book held in one hand. In other words, it leads to sexual arousal in a susceptible reader, in this instance the paedophile. But the sexual *interest* existed anyway, and who is to say that the arousal will inflame the paedophile sexually to assault a flesh-and-blood child? So far, not a scrap of reputable evidence has been produced for this. On the other hand, soldiers, schoolboys and prisoners all are familiar with the powerful role of masturbation in dispelling an urge for the real thing – and the responsible sexual deviant in our society (they do exist) is more of a prisoner than most. Even the most decorous nude photograph of a child, invested with some imagination, can serve for him as Freud's 'intermediate area of fantasy sanctioned by general human consent' – the substitute for harmful reality. Narcissus prefers the shadow to the substance. For Narcissus, says R. D. Laing, 'masturbation is the act of choice'. Banning the very possession of child-porn is indeed a perilous course on which to embark.

So, if the free availability of porn is an alternative outlet, a protective safety-valve, are the porn merchants after all public benefactors? They are not – because we are now brought up short against a very spiky dilemma. Photographs need their subjects, in this case children, and what of the effect on them? Mr Cyril Townsend had collected some accounts of children distressed by having been photographed for commercial pornography, and this distress is as real whether caused by the modelling itself or that nebulous thing castigated by the Paedophile Information Exchange as 'society's hypocritical attitude'. The argument over which to blame is artificial. Yet, with the noteworthy exception of Mr Emlyn Hooson, no one has yet drawn attention to the vast range of material the Bill would cover, and some possibly ludicrous consequences. For example, the group led by Mr Michael Alison, reporting to the Williams Committee, want it made 'a criminal offence to persuade, employ, or offer payment to any child or juvenile to be photographed or appear on the stage or before a camera unclothed'. Well, we still revere artists and sculptors whose output consisted of little else besides the naked young form; what are we to say of them? Or what of photographers like the Victorian Frank Sutcliffe, and the Royal Family of the time who admired and purchased his work, in particular his famous *The Water Rats* of 1886? Already this week a Mr Edward Brinicombe has taken a chain-saw to the Eros statue in Piccadilly Circus 'as a protest against child pornography'. Perhaps next week will see a high-minded chiseller at work on the façade of Broadcasting House. There is a risk not only of our being left open to the derision of our grandchildren, but of distorting children's sexual development by this 'dirty' view of the human body.

Having identified, as I think we must, the perfectly innocent nude photograph, we are left with a great deal of material in a very different category. Here we could place at one extreme the kind of pornography in which children are induced to engage in frankly sexual behaviour. There is a strong chance that the anxiety of what is likely to be a frightening experience will inhibit and distort the child's evolving sexuality, and that he will be left with sexual fears that might themselves be later expressed as deviance. There is a need to guard against such encounters, whether they are photographed or not. Indeed, the porn aspect is almost an irrelevance, since the matter can be dealt with under the Sexual Offences Act of 1956.

There remains a 'grey area' – the many photographs of children who are posed, singly or in groups, in a definitely provocative way, though there is no overt sexual activity. What harm could a youngster take, one might ask, from doing no more than striking a brief pose or two before the camera? Perhaps none, but unhappily the matter is not so simple. More often than not, the youngster who falls into the hands of sexually exploitive adults is one who already suffers from some of the known 'risk factors' that make for adult sexual deviation – an absent father perhaps, a distant relationship with his family, a weak family structure – and he is looking for caring adult substitutes of some kind, distorted though their interest in him might be. Indeed, perhaps the youngster who accepts such encounters readily is more at risk than the one who is distressed, repelled, or complains to his parents. But the balance is a delicate one and each case needs highly skilled evaluation. It is my firm impression (and in this I am supported by Anthony Storr, quoted in the *Guardian*) that the uproar and publicity that follows discovery of such incidents is frequently more emotionally damaging to the child than the experience itself; indeed, it often amounts to a scandal in its own right. I would make a strong plea that the statutory responsibility for investigating cases of apparent pornographic exploitation of children should be primarily that of the social services, with the discretionary power of criminal proceedings only when any risk to the child cannot be speedily removed.

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Stephen Games

Problems of a Strong Personality

Most national museums and galleries in this country are controlled by independent boards of trustees. The Victoria and Albert Museum on the other hand is a sub-section of the Department of Education and Science and thus answerable to the Government. This has meant that, when in the last year the Government called for cut-backs in civil service spending, the V & A had to comply by submitting to 11 per cent staff reductions. For a civil service department, there was just no choice – a sad fact at a time when the slightly smaller British Museum, with independent trustees, was upping its staff from 1,000 to 1,016.

The V & A responded to staff cuts by axing its regional services, the department which used to take travelling exhibitions round the country. They made other cuts in the Conservation Department and among the warders, to bring numbers down by 81 to 626. Selective departmental cuts were felt to be a better solution than cuts right across the board. However, cuts among warders had to be accompanied by gallery closures so that now the V & A is shut all day Friday. Closures are worse at the museum's outstations, controlled jointly with the National Trust: Apsley House is shut on Mondays and Fridays, while Ham House and Osterley Park House are shut four days a week.

News of these closures has resulted in a campaign calling for a change of status for the V & A to bring it in line with the National Gallery and the Tate. In a letter to *The Times*, Hugh Leggatt claimed:

> neither the imminent closure of up to a third of its galleries on any one of its opening days, nor the closure of the entire museum on Fridays, nor indeed the dismantling of its services to the regions, nor other privations would have happened if it were a trustee museum,

and called for a petition to disestablish the V & A from government control. Leggatt's claims are twofold, that closures were the inevitable result of staff cuts, and that the only proof against such closures is trusteeship. These claims need to be examined.

When the Government announced its civil service economies the director of the V & A, Dr Roy Strong, decided to implement the closures which have since taken place. At the time, however, the staff were not satisfied with his plans and worked out alternatives. They found that closures could be avoided by rearranging shifts and workloads. It was tricky to plan and meant that some security staff on overtime grades would be working up to 12-hour days, but they were prepared to do it to keep the museum open six and a half days a week. Their proposals were dismissed by the director and his advisory council on the grounds that overworked staff could not provide adequate security and that the scheme would have involved the closing of certain galleries every day. But under the implemented scheme of the director, the security staff are working a 12-hour day anyway and even more massive closures have taken place. So union representatives are angry that their plan, which seems more plausible and less damaging than the director's, was not given a chance. They are also cross that while the closure of the 130-year-old regional services department was intended to make other lay-offs unnecessary, it has turned out that this cutback is just one of many.

The dissatisfaction of the staff was misinterpreted by Lords Goodman and Gibson in their letter to *The Times* on 19 January:

> Many of the staff are dispirited by the situation and would feel a great sense of encouragement if the change (to trusteeship) were to be made. It may well be that this is the most important consideration, namely the psychological effect on the people working in the museum . . . since a sense that the Government are directly interfering in matters which are immune to such interference elsewhere cannot but damage enthusiasm.

Thus the anger of the staff was made to appear as if it stemmed from dissatisfaction with the museum's position within the DES.

Speaking on behalf of the director, the chairman of the V & A's advisory council, Lord Hood, tried to make the same point – that the staff were eager to devolve. He referred to a committee of keepers set up by the director last year with a brief to sound out opinion on the question. They dutifully reported back that there was a wholehearted recommendation to disestablish. He failed to point out that most

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of the opinions sounded were those of staff in other museums, not the V & A, which already have trustee status.

As it happens, the staff at the V & A are very happy with their position within the DES. When he was Arts Minister, Hugh Jenkins asked the staff at various levels whether they wanted to stop being civil servants and come under a board of trustees and the answer was universally negative. This was confirmed more recently by Cyril Cooper, Norman Ellis and John Sheldon, representing the Institution of Professional Civil Servants, the Association of First Division Civil Servants, and the Civil Servants Union respectively. (About 75 per cent of the V & A is unionised.) They pointed out that, while staff were disappointed and angry at being discriminated against in the civil service cuts, they were far from convinced that they would be any better off within a more autonomous museum and that, in effect, they might as well take what security they could from their position within the various unions of civil servants.

The unions have accepted the difficulties of their new position with sober good sense. Cuts have been absorbed by not replacing staff who are retiring and by curbing outside recruitment. All job vacancies that have come up within the year have been filled from within. It means that the staff are stretched but they are managing.

The Science Museum is in a similar position. It, too, is part of the DES and has had its staff cut by 11 per cent from 557 to 494. Not only is it getting by without any closures but its director, Dr Margaret Weston, has announced that a second outstation, a museum of applied photography, is being planned. It may well be that she is underplaying the problems and courting the goodwill of the DES, but she shows at least that it is possible to get by without the histrionics building up around the V & A.

There the superfluous closures have already started to create the climate of opinion upon which Strong is clearly counting to achieve his objective. Until recently he was surprisingly quiet over the controversy: Shirley Williams had asked him not to comment until March when the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries which is investigating the issue will have delivered its report to the DES. During that time, other voices – friends in high places perhaps – started to call for a campaign in the media. This was quite handy for Strong as it appeared that the concern for the V & A's devolvement was a real public issue emanating from disinterested parties and not from himself. Since then, however, calls in Parliament for explanations have led Mrs Williams to release Strong from his vow of silence and he quickly made up for lost time with two television appearances. His line has been to speculate hysterically on how the situation might worsen. He has suggested that a third of the museum *might* have to close from April, and that Imperial College's Huxley Building which is going to be converted into the Cole Building (commemorating the V & A's founder and housing prints, drawings and photographs) *might* not be able to open for lack of staff. Quite simply, Strong has taken every opportunity of inflating the situation and saying to what extent he is not prepared to tolerate it.

It is, therefore, noteworthy that whereas the patient Dr Weston complimented her staff on their happy working relationship and recognised that the Science Museum had flourished under the DES, Dr Strong grossly insulted his staff by announcing that the fate of the V & A was in the public's hands – a huge snub at the keepers and their deputies and all the other staff who make the museum work. In other words, he was saying that he would steer the V & A in a direction called for by 'public opinion' rather than by his staff.

To the outsider, the four years of Dr Strong's directorship at the V & A have certainly turned the museum into a far more lively place than previously. At any one time there are eight special exhibitions going on, and these are heavily advertised. Some of these special shows charge an entrance fee and huge takings are involved. In the last year the museum earned £345,000 from paying exhibitions, including £170,000 from the Fabergé alone. Attendance is rapidly rising as well: 1.5 million in 1976; 2.3 million in 1977.

The V & A was originally set up on the profits from the Great Exhibition of 1851 to show the best in the applied arts, especially for the benefit of students, scholars and practising designers, and the V & A has a large number of hugely important permanent collections, which cost £4¼m. a year to administer. While special exhibitions attract people into the museum who would not ordinarily go there, there is no evidence that they are returning to look at these permanent collections. With the very small resources available, there is much concern that funds which are badly needed for basic repairs and restoration are being frittered on attention-seeking publicity gimmicks. Describing 'Say When', an uncaptioned exhibition of teapots and jugs in which the visitor had to guess the age and origin of the exhibits, Bevis Hillier, otherwise an advocate of Dr Strong's administration, commented that the director had acquired 'a reputation for organising and commissioning exhibitions which are rather too much of a giggle'.

It all seems to be part of a promotion operation in which the Strong personality and the V & A are inextricably linked in a superficial appeal for publicity. Heavily advertised ventures draw attention away from consultation problems between the director and the staff, who are being made to feel like extras in a one-man show. They therefore seriously fear the prospect of greater autonomy for local management (union slang for the director) whereby he will be answerable only to friends on the board, some of whom, it is claimed, were putting in early bids for trusteeship when they wrote to *The Times* in his support. Dr Strong needs to provide some pretty firm assurances as to whose interests his greater power and independence would be used for before the staff support the campaign for devolution.

Punch

Countless millions of loyal NS readers have been lying awake recently and wondering what changes the imminent new editor may wreak. Even a few disloyal ones have been off their food.

They need fret no longer! This week's PUNCH contains an 8-page New New Statesman supplement, in which all is made partially clear!

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London Diary

☐ The census of 1981 will soon be upon us. Its designers, I am told, are to have another shot at the old problem – how do you discover the colour of a man's skin when apparently asking him something else? This time the question is to be: where was your father born? Few can answer this with certainty. I was not alive when my father was born and never saw his birth certificate. He often named his birthplace to me but, being an incorrigible romancer, changed the place according to each passing whim. My great-grandfather was alleged to have come from Dunblane, which will soon, I suppose, be in a foreign country and thus make me an immigrant. My children, too, will be in trouble for my birthplace – Birkdale UDC – no longer exists. And what about the Royal Family? Every sovereign between 1714 and 1910 had a German mother except for Edward VII who had a German father. This raises awkward questions. Even a direct question about colour would give unsatisfactory answers. I have just scrutinised my face in the mirror and would have to return 'reddish-brown, increasingly brown in summer'. I have never seen a white man and should be most alarmed if I turned white myself. 'White' of course is a moral or rather immoral term, not a physical one. As Winston Churchill said, 'Why be apologetic about Anglo-Saxon superiority? We are superior.' Randolph Churchill took a different view. When presented on a visit to South Africa with the inquiry 'race', he wrote, 'human'. I can think of no other honest answer and the reply to inquiry about my father's birthplace will be 'not known'.

☐ Decimal folly has taken a new turn. Soon, it seems, packaged cheese will be sold in grams – or is it grammes? But cheese sold by weight will still be dealt with in pounds. How is the ordinary shopper to know whether half-a-pound of cheese is better or worse value than four or five hundred grams? The only people to benefit from this confusion will be the makers of pocket computers which in any case I cannot work. At every stage we have been hustled into decimals without any clear explanation of what was involved or any full debate in Parliament. No one told us that decimals were a foolish and antiquated system, no longer used by mathematicians. Decimal coinage has done much to stoke inflation. We should not have tolerated the incredible rise in prices if they had been expressed in terms of real money. Alas, we have become a tame people.

☐ I do not expect to learn much about foreign countries from films or television. All the same I enjoyed the BBC week on China on the few occasions when I watched it. I do not believe, for instance, that the scenes in the Peking Zoo were specially staged for the occasion. Though they told me nothing about the political system they assured me that the Chinese are a delightful, gay people. Now the Chinese in London could do something to confirm this impression. Every time I walk up Portland Place I look sadly at the shuttered windows of the Chinese embassy. They are a symbol of the barrier which the Chinese maintain between themselves and us. How much more cheerful Portland Place would seem if the shutters were down, chandeliers gleamed through the windows and elegantly dressed guests were arriving for a party. I should also like to see the Turkish embassy in Portland Place resume its former glories as they were in the days of the Ottoman Empire. I have never frequented diplomatic parties except in the days of rationing after the war when Tito's ambassador provided the most lavish entertainment in London. The wiser guests, I remember, took knives and forks with them in order to do justice to the food. Probably I shall never need this equipment again but I shall rejoice, and not only for gastronomic reasons, when the shutters of the Chinese embassy are down and the doors opened to all those who love and admire the Chinese people. Incidentally I remark from the BBC series that correspondents in Hong Kong are as well qualified to judge China as those in Riga were qualified to judge Soviet Russia in the inter-war years.

☐ Where have all the young people gone to? Of course I know they exist because they make all public houses that sell real ale too crowded for me. But what do they want? What are they concerned about? In the 1960s students were an active force. They staged sitdowns. They occupied the offices of vice-chancellors. They provided material for articles on the student problem. Now they have vanished from the headlines. When the National Union of Students elects a communist president, she turns out to be as impeccably moderate and Eurocommunist as Berlinguer himself. Women are soon to be admitted to most men's colleges at Oxford. I battled for this cause for years and thought it would change the character of the colleges. Instead I read that the new arrivals are anxious to be treated as men. They want places in the college eight and are eager to tramp across a cold quadrangle in their dressing gowns when they want a bath. Yet students, both men and women, must still have ambitions to change things and make a better world. I can only conclude that old age has at last come upon me. Here am I waiting for news of the next student wave of discontent. No news reaches me. Have I grown deaf or is there really no message for me to hear?

☐ It is an immutable principle of contemporary life that, as everything theoretically becomes better, the best things in life are increasingly difficult to obtain. Take for instance Bokma, the finest of Dutch gins. Years ago I was introduced to this elixir by a Dutch naval officer who told me that there were two varieties – oude and jonge, old and young. Oude was better but jonge was less fattening and, being overweight, he always drank it. As he drank three jonges to my one oude, I doubt whether his remedy did him much good. However I took his advice. After much searching I found a shipper in London who could supply me with oude Bokma. For many years the cases rolled in. Now I am suddenly told: no more oude Bokma, I must make do with jonge. What am I to do? An occasional trip to the duty-free shop at Schiphol would be expensive and would not keep me supplied for long. I suppose I shall have to fall back on grappa which is the next best thing. I know what will happen if I do: the supplies will at once dry up and I shall be in difficulties again. Perhaps I should have pity on other drinkers of grappa and keep my ill-fated hands off it.

☐ Victorian churches are closing or being pulled down nearly every week. The latest casualty merits a particular lament. It is the Reformed, formerly the Congregational, Church in Lyndhurst Road, Hampstead. This, with its unusual hexagonal shape, is one of the best works by Sir Alfred Waterhouse. It is also historically memorable. For nearly 50 years its pulpit was occupied by Robert F. Horton, one of the most famous Nonconformist preachers. He was a preacher of a new type, no longer fundamentalist or evangelical, but modernist in theology and more concerned to apply ethics to political questions. The enlightened flocked to hear him. Now many members of the church and the present minister himself live far away and it will close when the minister retires in March. It is not only that members of the congregation have moved away. Many of those who live in or near Lyndhurst Road still have the same enlightened views as those who sat at the feet of Robert F. Horton. But the enlightened no longer go to church. God and the enlightened have been divorced, as Lyndhurst Road Church bears witness.

A. J. P. Taylor

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Sex Pistols Sid Vicious, who agreed to hand over his passport to police only two days ago as a condition of bail on a drugs charge, was allowed it back as he may be travelling abroad. – *Evening Standard* (Mrs B. Woodhead)

☐ Standing in the kitchen of their Admiralty House flat, Mrs Mulley delicately picked up a Minton teacup and said with mock horror: 'It would be an awful gaffe to give this to a general. They get the larger ones with the golden spirals.' This had been explained to Mrs Mulley by a Government official shortly after her husband was appointed Defence Secretary. – *Daily Telegraph* (Stephen Corrin)

☐ In a speech at Mytholmroyd, Mrs Thatcher accused the Government of poaching Conservative policies. She said that during the period Labour had been in power there had been a steady reduction in the standard of living of the average person. – *The Times* (Mrs V. Borooah)

☐ The Royal Free's administration strongly denies that cats have been in theatres but admits that the hospital has been infested. All attempts by a firm of rat-catchers to eradicate cats have failed, it adds. – *Hampstead & Highgate Express* (John St John)

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University Forum

James Campbell*

Pictures of an Exhibitionist

On the occasion of Anne Sexton's death over three years ago, Stanley Reynolds wrote in the *Guardian*: 'Of all the things I would like to be, it is the poet which is the best daydream. And after that, to be in love with one. But, of course, you are always in love with the poets . . .' I don't know whether Reynolds ever met Anne Sexton, not that it matters, but if not she wouldn't have known that she was only the latest in a long string of *affaires* he has been having with writers – Kafka, Hemingway, Joyce – since his *Guardian* pieces began. These are literary *affaires*, of course, in which all love is platonic and is expressed through identification, which can be either simple or eccentric but in which the actual person of the writer concerned shrinks and disappears before the image conjured of him by his words.

I myself have been involved in many such *affaires*; James Baldwin, Roger Fry, Robert Lowell have all had their spells of being me – and, most recently, Norman Mailer. Of course, Mailer is a very easy writer to fall for. Critics love to hate him, but I take a different line: I believe it is possible to love Mailer *and* to hate him at the same time, which is sure to be a part of someone's theory of love (romantic love) anyway. Probably Mailer's. Recently, at a private opening of an exhibition of some paintings by a woman painter I had never heard of, I took on Norman Mailer's identity (or, at least, the identity I glean from the leaves of his books) for a few minutes. This was probably when I fell for him. A whiff of adventure hanging on the air swelled to an aroma so seductive that I lost the grip on my own identity and slipped momentarily across the existential edge into Mailer's.

The paintings were, frankly, awful. Large, unframed, empty canvases with 'peripheral activity' stripes on the edges and around the corners. Basic colour was grey and the paintings varied about as much as one mile to the next on the M1. The painter of these turned-off TV screens, an American, was there in black leather boots and a kilt, discussing earnestly with each new introducee a set curriculum of people, places, exhibitions and more people.

'This is dreadful,' I whispered to a friend. 'Let's get out.'

However, he, a more persistent student of the post-avant-garde than I, wished to remain and examine a series of prints which played on the theme of a circle on a grey background with as much imagination as a tortoise in doubt. Therefore I had no alternative but to stay and accept another glass of the sponsor's wine. I sat down, murmuring, 'awful', over and over again under my breath.

Then my friend came up with an idea. Why didn't I tell the lady painter exactly what I thought of her canvases? I couldn't do that, I replied, shrinking. Not at *her* opening.

'Why not?' he pressed. 'Blow away all the sycophants. Why, I'll bet there isn't a single person in this gallery actually *likes* these things.'

We turned our eyes to a corner where the painter was talking to some young people in a what-I-am-trying-to-do-in-my-work attitude.

Their heads were tipped in 'how interesting' positions and occasionally one of them harmonised with her thus, 'Mmmmmm'.

In my bag was a copy of *Advertisements For Myself*:

> As the years go by and I become a little more possible for the Ph.D. mills, graduate students will begin to write about the slapping of my creative rage, of Mailer's vision of his rage as his shield, when what I was trying to say was simply, 'The shits are killing us'.

Yes, Mailer *would* tell her. (This was a con-trick I had played on myself before: an entrance or a pronouncement is the more spectacular if one becomes F. Scott Fitzgerald while making it.)

My friend had moved off to where the painter and her audience were. I recognised one from a local paper and another from the student rag. Both had notebooks in hand. The lady's face was haggard, hair peroxide-white. She had a washed-out, 'always three in the morning' look. I could feel my glass of mild Bordeaux transmogrify to a bourbon on the rocks; my hair began to kink and I was even aware that my mental colloquialisms were changing as I issued myself the challenge. I strolled – strolled? *swaggered* – to where she sat. One of the students had just asked a dumb question.

'Don't like to interrupt,' I began, doing just that, jabbing the glass in the direction of her not uninteresting face, 'but really, your paintings are very unimaginative. I don't like them much.' Was I *really saying* this? She used a small red hand to push back her hair.

'Oh,' she said, her face changing, 'you don't?' The face changed again. 'Well, that's your problem.'

I dropped my doubts behind me and went on, jabbing again, 'Actually, you know, I think it's *your* problem. I mean what I want to know is, are you not using your imagination or do you just not have any?'

She looked worried, embarrassed. I had slugged her on her home ground and it was very mean of me. She was drunk, possibly an alcoholic. One of the students looked at her and then at me and laughed. 'Listen, honey, I'm trying to say something to people and if they don't like it, well . . .' She made a thumbs down sign as if somehow that suggested what they might do. I pointed out the contradiction in her thought, but she changed the subject again. 'I'm trying to make you think about boundaries. Have you ever thought about boundaries?'

My mind was struggling for a way to phrase a reply to this, meanwhile I played for time with, 'I'm not trying to be rude, but . . .'

'Have you? I'm not trying to be rude either. Have you ever thought about that?'

'In a conceptual sense, yes.'

'Right, well you're asking me to put images into my work and that's . . . I've written about it. My paintings make a political point . . .'

She grinned weirdly. I could tell that she was off again on a different trail. But I had dropped my guard. I tried to come back with, 'There's nothing in your paintings. And if you don't care what I as a viewer think about that then you've failed twice over.' Hesitation again. Would Norman have followed through with 'They're crap!'? Or would he have left it where it was with 'They're crap!' written in the air in invisible ink to appear in the afterheat of the argument? But she had moved on.

'I'm an American. And we don't speak the same language. Right? Alright. Now, maybe we don't speak the same visual language either. What age are you?' I told her. 'Nice. I've a son about the same age. I know your scene. Let's say they're adult paintings You probably like the Impressionists, huh?' That weird grin again.

I was down. In truth, *she* was down but I couldn't hit her. How can you hit an opponent who offers no defence? The General is nothing without an enemy he respects. I knew that I considered the painting to be pointless, but somehow you always expect – naïvely, no doubt – that the person responsible will be capable of offering a sincere justification. A-*dult* paintings! Did she actually say that? She was counting me out.

'All that: Monet, Cézanne, Toulouse-Lautrec, you can do all that for yourself, can't you?' Her arms flailed. I didn't have another punch to throw, logic is powerless against the stubborn will backed up by brute force. So I retired hurt.

'Oh, forget it,' I said with a flap of the hand. Norman had long since fled. He left when he first set eyes on these sterile, grey canvases lined up like corpses on the nice white walls. I sipped the last dregs of my wine, scooped up a handful of peanuts, and went after him.

*James Campbell reads English at the University of Edinburgh.

SOMETHING YOU OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT

The pressures of modern life tend to distract our attention from fundamental realities. There is a spiritual basis to life which many of us are now ignoring at the cost of our happiness and security. There are some eternal verities behind the teachings of all religions. In your own interest, learn something about these from THEOSOPHY, the Ageless Wisdom Religion.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

May It Please Your Majesty

Oundle, of which, as you know, I happily write from time to time, was a name that, though well enough known, and deservedly so, in the better educational circles, was some fifty years ago not at all familiar to the world at large. Even its pronounciation was to some a bit of a puzzle (it is pronounced not as in 'Oooh!' but as in 'Ow!' Boys with even the faintest suspicion of a Cockney accent were encouraged to think of it as 'Arndle'). This unfamiliarity meant that the name got itself quite often quaintly transformed. If you wrote the 'O' with the slightest of wobbles, and the rest of it not very distinctly, you were in trouble at once. Writing to London for Gamage's catalogue, that prime pre-Christmas treat, or to Gertrude Lawrence, a treat all the year round, for a photograph, the answer sometimes came back addressed to A. Marshall, Dugden House, Bundle, near Peterborough. Bundle alternated with Durdle, a name by which the place is still affectionately known to many ex-inmates. Occasionally Oundle became Dundee and Miss Lawrence had quite a nice little round trip.

And speaking of names, I am afraid that in some, if not all, ways this column must be an unrewarding disappointment to many of my readers. No exalted and ritzy social doings. No thrilling political experiences (brunch with the Healeys). No rich names in rich places. No chatterbangs with the eminent. It is, instead, a muted record of a life of all-round failure but I have always set my face against making an attempt to jolly up my thin material in the way that gossip writers do by placing key names in heavy black bold letters which then leap excitingly out at you from the text. It would be simplicity itself to give a wildly false impression of the peaceful daily round at Appleton by writing: 'Went to the village and bought some **Rolls,** wishing that I were the **Aga Khan** and could afford to do all my shopping at **Harrods.** At the travelling library, searched in vain for a life of **Princess Grace of Monaco** but had to settle instead for the latest **Daphne du Maurier.** Then home through the orchard, reminding myself that the **Duke of Devonshire,** which fruited so finely last year, requires a good mulch. Opened a tin of baked beans, placed them on buttered toast and then munched my lunch, listening to **Beethoven** on Radio 3 and wondering what **The Queen** was having for *her* lunch.'

Actually, we no longer need to be in doubt about any detail of her day by day life for the indefatigable Helen Cathcart has been, in *The Queen in Her Circle*, at it again. Mrs Cathcart, a reverential curtsey in every line of her rich prose, has already covered (an unfortunate verb, perhaps, in that hugely horse-infested world) the Queen Mother, and in rightly adulatory phrases but which remind one of giant dollops of sacchariney meringue, together with Princess Margaret, Prince Charles, Princess Anne, Lord Snowdon ('etc., etc.' boasts the book's list of this authoress's previous offerings, and who on earth can these nameless royal etceteras be?). W. H. Allen will sell you this latest work for £4.95, pleasing snaps and all.

We kick off in the Queen's sitting-room at Buckingham Palace, a retreat sourly described by Richard Crossman, our late editor and seldom given to looking on the bright side of things, as 'a dim, horrible little room'. Not too dusty, some might think: pale gold Chinese carpet, elephant-grey curtains, Waterford chandelier, and a profusion of what Mrs C, in a style all her own, insists on referring to as 'personal accessories', in this case mainly equestrian ones – bookends featuring Ascot postilions clip-clopping past the stands, a mounted guardsman in silver, racing trophies, a painting of the great winner, Aureole, and a porcelain model of Princess Anne clearing a fence (on a horse, of course), just a few of 'the remindful tokens that everywhere surround the Queen', plus a number of home-made calendars from 'the small fry who thus solve their Christmas gift problem for Aunt Lilibet'.

So serene is our chronicler's approach and her contented acceptance of what she finds, that one could easily imagine her fully at home even if wafted back about 440 years and into the reign of Henry VIII, himself no stranger, God knows, to personal accessories. 'His Majesty, in great heart and just home from hawking at Hounslow, let it be known amongst his closest circle that yet another of Dan Cupid's arrows had managed to pierce its way through our beloved monarch's royal hauberk, this time in the personable person of a fair jewel from the august house of Howard. Methinks I hear wedding bells.' It seems possible that Henry VIII, who could stand just so much and was a person of, in some ways, considerable taste, might well have cooled off this well-intentioned writer in the Tower and confiscated her quill. No such luck nowadays.

On we press with our peep behind the scenes, delighted to find a sovereign who is pleasingly animated when off duty, 'eyes sparkling, hands waving, voice bubbling, nicknames flying, full of fun and repartee, a raconteur'. Just like you and me, you see, and never more so than when setting foot in downpours of rain, the first royal ruler since King John to do so, on Magna Carta Island in the Thames and being welcomed indoors by a couple who lived there ('Oh, Lord, my umbrella's dripped on your carpet'). However, it made, we are told, 'a fun day' and the Queen 'obviously enjoys extracting her own nuggets of experience'. And in case you should imagine, as so many did, that one of the nuggets was unacceptable and, at Princess Margaret's wedding, that was a disapproving face that Her Majesty had on, Mrs Cathcart has news for us. 'She was struggling to control her tender sentiment for her sister.' Oh I *see*. But of course!

Back we flash to long ago and the start of it all in 1923 ('Amid the potted palms and roses, Bertie and Elizabeth waltzed and foxtrotted'), and their first house, White Lodge in Richmond Park, with its mahogany-seated and throne-like lavatories and the Prince of Wales's ready wit ('They enjoyed his sally that the house was most commodious'). Then the arrival of Baby, dosed with dill-water to help it preserve a suitably relaxed demeanour for the christening photos, and the nanny, Alah, and the governess, 'Crawfie' (what a scream it was when she sat down on a rickety gold chair in the Belgian Suite and went right through to the floor. We all *roared*), and then, of course, Margaret, individual as ever even when urgently summoned to the wartime air-raid shelter ('She wasted time in searching for a pair of the right-coloured knickers').

I do see that it is extremely difficult to write acceptably about living royalty but intending biographers should really think twice before they enshrine in mush a family which works so hard and with an efficiency that deserves better treatment. To love and admire is not enough. And alas, historians a hundred years hence, hunting about, hot for interesting certainties in the available material, will find such books about as valuable as bus tickets.

Roger Woddis

Guernsey's Answer

The Labour Party plans to end Guernsey's status as a tax-haven.

Truly ye come of the breed
That vanquished barbaric foes:
Your children paid with their blood,
And now you may pay through
the nose.

Exiled from hearth and home,
Chased from your native shore –
Now devils who speak your tongue
Are the enemy at the door.

Scouts at St Peter Port
Scan the approaching seas
For landing craft packed with troops
Disguised as two MPs.
Yet liberty's lamp still burns
With more than a feeble flicker,
When rentiers stand four-square
With Butlin, Jacklin and Whicker.

Ye shall fight them on the beaches,
Whatever the cost may be,
For the Law that guards your haven
And the right to live tax-free.
From your pockets of resistance
Old words ring out anew:
'Never in our exchequered history
Was so much owed by so few.'

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Letters to the Editor

Holland v. Galbraith

Sir, On reading John Kenneth Galbraith's article in last week's NS, I expected the familiar cutting edge of irony to follow the title 'In Praise of Multinationals'. But the irony was missing. What emerged was virtually a seal of approval from formerly one of the world's foremost critics of big business – more adroit, more persuasive and certainly more felicitously argued than the 'outrageously clumsy' defence which, as he points out, they tend to make for themselves.

Superficially, this might well appear an aberration from what has become known as Galbraithian economics. But in fact the shortcomings are analytical, and relate essentially to the limits of Galbraith's own contribution itself – giant by the standard of the stunted orthodoxies force-fed to many students – but muscle-bound when the crunch comes.

A key illustration is Galbraith's case, extending his arguments on a white collar 'technostructure', that multinational managers constitute 'an international civil service' and that 'no multinational corporation can be suspected of promoting tension between the governments of countries in which they operate'. An undergraduate student of international relations, if given the chance, could contrast the essential distinction between a civil service which is at least nominally subject to an elected government, and the lack of a global political authority matching and subordinating multinational power. Any observer of Chile might ask where Galbraith was when not only ITT but other multinationals conspired with the CIA and elements in the State Department to bring down the government of Allende, with repercussions not only through Latin America, but also in Europe. Similarly, one does not need a Leninist theory of imperialism to see the manner in which the oil multinationals and foreign powers brought down Mossadeq when he tried to nationalise the oil majors, with a delayed political impact in the rise of OPEC from which the world is still reeling.

Galbraith argues that, with the passage from national to multinational capital, the latter has made a 'profound contribution to international amity', and that 'the absence of economic conflict, like peace in general, is so unobstrusive that we often do not notice it'. But the key question, neglected by Galbraith, is national sovereignty versus multinational capital: whether the elected governments of countries whose modern sectors of industry are dominated by multinational capital – whether foreign or their own – can feasibly fulfil basic needs without transforming the power relations between big business and the state. It is here that the national management of multinationals – the 'technostructure' which he regards as autonomous – is ultimately impotent relative to the power of the board of the global corporation to decide what is produced, where, when, why and for whom.

Galbraith argues that multinationals have promoted 'a more rapid spread of technology, a better international division of labour, greater productivity, greater aggregate employment', and that this is 'the old case for international trade'. He might read Bertil Ohlin, who recently gained the Nobel Prize for a book which mainly pointed out that direct foreign production tends to *substitute* for trade. Otherwise, he should realise that multinational production and trade – between the *same* companies in different countries – fundamentally undermines the old division of labour between *different* companies in different countries.

For instance, under 'the old case for international trade', countries such as Britain or France could remain competitive versus countries such as Brazil or South Korea because – while wages in the latter might be a tenth of those in Europe, Britain or France – the latter also employed capital in a manner which was ten times or more as efficient, producing comparable or lower costs per unit of output. A crucial problem for developed countries now, in modern industry, lies in the fact that multinational capital can employ the most efficient technology, management, marketing and other skills with the low cost labour in un-unionised, under-unionised or plainly fascist countries. No developed country can compete with the resultant unit costs.

Ironically, the 'great reduction . . . of the importance of tariffs', which Galbraith ascribes to the multinational corporation, is likely to be challenged in the near future in the developed countries precisely because of the nature of the new multinational mode of production, distribution and exchange. Also, governments of the Left – at least in Europe – may be likely to extend the public sector beyond the nationalisation of basic services and industry which Galbraith, in *Economics and the Public Purpose* wrongly identifies as socialism. If the grandmaster of verbal felicity employed an assistant to master the elements of European analysis of the relations between capital, labour and the state, he also would find that a crucial case for challenging multinational capital lies in the transformation of the social relations of production – i.e. the democratisation and accountability of economic power – rather than in public ownership alone. At least hitherto, this is an area where we might have thought that we could count on the support of his own powerful intuition and intelligence.

STUART HOLLAND

35 Sussex Square
Brighton

The Fencourt File

Sir, Mr Fenton is an entertaining fellow, but he ought not to be let loose among facts. He said last week that the *Sunday Times* has yet to update its early account of the Scott-Thorpe saga and he advances as the first virtue of *The Pencourt File* its analysis of the unsuccessful attempt by Sir Harold Wilson to blame the South Africans for plotting against the Liberal Party.

We have, in fact, published several reports since our major article of March 1976, which Mr Fenton, characteristically without supporting detail, calls misleading. The most important of these later reports was an 'Insight' article on 15 May 1977. It divulged, in two full columns, what Mr Fenton nearly a year later regards as the important new theme of *The Pencourt File*. The report began:

> The South African plot to undermine the British political life – luridly unveiled just over a year ago by Prime Minister, Mr Harold Wilson – never existed. An investigation by the BBC, which made a private deal with Wilson for information, showed that his suspicions were groundless. But it never broadcast this fact.

The Insight report gave an account also, the first as it happens, of Sir Harold's alleged anxieties about the security services.

Mr Fenton keeps getting excited about the Scott affair without contributing any enlightenment to it. He now chooses to add to the murk by saying that the *Sunday Times* or its editor is remarkably uncurious about the affair. The plot thickens. Since we have published exclusively three of the most striking developments and spent considerable energies trying to discover more, Mr Fenton puzzles us. Does he joke or is he obsessed? All that we will not do is print rumour as fact or join in a witch hunt.

HAROLD EVANS
Editor

Sunday Times
London WC1

Sir, No doubt James Fenton was joking when he remarked (NS 10 February) that if Wilson had knighted James Margach 'he might have kept his trap shut' and not revealed so much unsavoury material in his courageous book *The Abuse of Power*. But the honours system being here, it is pertinent to ask just why James Margach – after more than 40 years distinguished service in the parliamentary Lobby – was not knighted under the Wilson regime when others in the press world were given knighthoods and peerages for damn all? Was the failure due to Sir Denis Hamilton's refusal to accept Wilson's suggestion that Joe Haines should succeed Margach on his retirement as Political Correspondent of the *Sunday Times*? Or was there another reason? Perhaps Sir Harold will provide the necessary enlightenment.

SIDNEY R. CAMPION

13 Argyle Court
Argyle Road
Southport

Hard Times

Sir, Stephen Koss (NS 3 February) quotes from *The Slump* by Chris Cook and John Stevenson that the 1930s saw a rise in the standard of living at least 'for those who remained in work'. Poor consolation for those who were out of work; 2¾ million registered unemployed (22 per

ZIMBABWE

The Facts about Rhodesia

'As the plot thickens in Zimbabwe with Ian Smith's attempts to get an internal settlement the pamphlet produced by the International Defence and Aid Fund, *Zimbabwe: The Facts about Rhodesia* is essential reading for real understanding of the issues at stake' — Labour Weekly.

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cent) in 1932 falling to 1¾ million (13 per cent) in 1938 (source: A. J. P. Taylor *English History 1914-1945*).

The rise in living standards was due partly to a fall in prices – seldom seen before or since. As I recall, at the Labour Exchange long queues were formed every quarter hour to sign on (and we signed on every day). Even then, London was lucky compared with the North, Wales, indeed anywhere except the South East. Many were unemployed straight from school until manhood. The only salvation was the prospect of a war.

I was trebly lucky: I received a small payment from my union in addition to the 'dole'; I got a job within six months thus avoiding the dreaded means test; and I lived at home with my parents. The general impression left on me was one of complete hopelessness and resignation. As for the Left Book Club (of which I was a member) and other 'dole literature', they merely confirmed what we could see with our own eyes.

S. G. Dixon

7 Elm Grove
North Harrow

The Case for Camden

Sir, Mr E. H. Campion (Letters 10 February) asserts that reverse discrimination is an insult to blacks. One would have thought blacks were the best judge of that. One ought also to note the extent to which affirmative action, or a 'leg-up', for disadvantaged groups, is already accepted in our society. The Disabled Persons (*Employment*) Act 1944, as *implemented* by statutory instrument, obliges an employer who has more than 20 employees, to employ a quota of 3 per cent or more of handicapped persons. Certain seats on London Underground trains are reserved for the handicapped and elderly persons. In the United States, war veterans are given some priority in job allocation. So it is hardly true to say that affirmative action to compensate for the present disadvantages caused by past discrimination is necessarily insulting to those benefited. No one is saying blacks are otherwise incapable of getting jobs or university places; rather that a white applicant marginally better than a black one should not gain a benefit from the past discrimination suffered by the black, if that explains the difference in ability between them.

David Pannick

Hertford College
Oxford

Stranger than Faction

Sir, In fraternal answer to Tom Mangold (Letters 10 February): I did not assume at all that the German Red Army Fraction should be called a Faction. I simply said 'I had thought they were a Faction' (before I saw Mangold's programme). The difference between the terms is perhaps not great – certainly not as great as the difference overlooked by Mr Mangold, between 'infer' and 'imply'.

Matters of wider interest were brought up last week by Robert Cottrell, whose 'University Forum' certainly justified its space. I would have been shocked at any time to read of a Cambridge student getting three years for possessing cannabis with intent to supply; but the fact that I served not long ago as a juror in Judge Wild's court has left me even more concerned. The only case in which I was called upon to contribute a verdict concerned cannabis again. A young Cambridge resident was discovered to have been cultivating the offending plant in his back garden. Specimens six feet high were produced in court, and there had apparently been upwards of one hundred of these in the herbaceous border. The verdict was a formality – and Judge Wild gave the green-fingered prisoner a six-month *suspended* sentence. Is intent to supply cannabis so very much more terrible than growing it? Or is Judge Wild simply as inconsistent as his name might suggest?

Judge Wild is known locally as 'Jokers'.

Russell Davies

42 Maids' Causeway
Cambridge

Museum Charges

Sir, A. J. P. Taylor (London Diary, 10 February) was wrong to blame the museums for the removal of charges. As is recounted more fully in my book *An Experience of Government and the Arts*, to be published by Marion Boyars in August, I was responsible for implementing Labour Party and Government policy in the matter, though I must admit that most of the Trustees were willing accomplices. With their help the legislative effort and administrative apparatus of months, if not years, was wholly overthrown in a couple of weeks. The considerations that the entrance fees cost more to collect than they were worth and that admissions had declined quite seriously doubtless added zest to the deed. There was even rejoicing.

In fact there is no better case for charging for entry to the national collections than there is for charging for borrowing books from public libraries and I am sorry that even after our experience at the hands of the EEC Alan Taylor still clings to the notion that they always order things better in other countries.

Hugh Jenkins

House of Commons

Shaw's Champions

Sir, The eponymous hero of Shaw's play, *The Honourable Bashville*, like that of his novel, *Cashel Byron's Profession*, is a boxing champion. Benny Green evidently ignored the play when he wrote *Shaw's Champions*, and this is a pity, since the novel represents only a part (and not the best part) of the engagement between Shaw and championship boxing.

If *Cashel Byron* is little-known (as your reviewer believes) then *Bashville* must be all but forgotten. How very sad! It is a sparkling, witty play in splendidly ridiculous Shakespearian blank-verse. With its classic Shavian preface it deserves a better fate.

Daniel Lowy

12 Manor Park Road
Sutton
Surrey

A Headmaster's Appointment

Sir, You recently (NS 6 January) ran a report by Tim Albert on the Sutton Community Centre in Sutton-in-Ashfield. Your readers might be interested to learn of a recent event that gives rise to worries on the part of a number of people directly or indirectly concerned with the school.

The present headmaster moves to a new community school at the end of the spring term, some five weeks hence, and we learned last week that a headmaster from another school within the local authority has been transferred to replace him. While it is clearly important, after a time of unrest, that the new headmaster should be installed quickly and quietly, and while we have no reason to doubt the credentials of the new incumbent, we, at least, were somewhat surprised that the vacancy was never apparently advertised. Given the educational significance of the Centre, such an action on the part of the local authority effectively excluded many eminent prospective applicants, from both the UK and abroad, from consideration. What, we are prompted to ask ourselves, is going on?

Roger A. Bowles
David K. Whynes

6 Waldeck Road
Carrington
Nottingham

Et in Orcadia

Sir, A. J. P. Taylor's tongue-in-cheek aside (NS 3 February): I must correct him on one error of fact in his Diary piece. He asserts that the SNP is as resolute in refusing independence to others as in demanding it for themselves, with reference to the Shetland and Orkney Islands. Not true, Sir.

If the people of the Orkney and Shetland Islands want independence from the rest of Scotland, then no SNP Government would stand in their way. The demand for a Shetlandic Republic, on the other hand, would only happen if the Scottish (sorry, *Scotch*) Government in Edinburgh were as fossilised and inept as the UK Government in London. Having no hang-ups about Empire, we will (sorry, *shall*) decentralise radically throughout Scotland. Not only the Shetlanders and Orcadians would therefore have more control over their own communities, but also the people of Maryhill, Dumfries and Skye.

What we object to is the way the Shetland and Orkney Islands are being used as political pawns for totally cynical ends. We know this is the British way (Britchness?), but it doesn't mean we have to vote for it.

Duncan MacLaren
Press Officer

Scottish National Party
6 North Charlotte Street,
Edinburgh

Areopagitica

Sir, South African censorship is irksome enough without mis-statement of facts, as in Michael Glyn's South African Diary (NS 27 January). He lists 11 books as banned, two of them (*How a Baby is Made* and *How Life Begins*) are in fact proscribed, though one can't imagine why. The rest, including most notably Fowles's novel *Daniel Martin*, *Hitler* (Fest), *Hitler's Children* (Becker), *Twilight of Capitalism* (Harrington), *The Great Railway Bazaar* (Theroux) and *How Long Will South Africa Survive?* (Johnson) are legally available.

Peter Harris
Literary Editor

The Cape Times
77 Burg Street
Cape Town

Syrie Maugham

Sir, I am writing a biography of Syrie Maugham, Dr Barnardo's daughter who was married to WSM and previously to (Sir) Henry Wellcome. I should be glad to hear from anyone who knew her, or her family, or who could throw light on Maugham's attempts to dispossess his daughter, Lady Glendevon.

Gerald McKnight

Savile Club
69 Brook Street
London W1

SEX PROBLEMS?

Sex and relationship counselling can help people who have sexual difficulties or suffer from sexual problems. Professional psychosexual therapy can help many woman who suffer from an inability to achieve orgasm and men who suffer from premature ejaculation. The Marie Stopes has regular clinics for individuals and couples seeking help, so if you feel you need professional advice ring 01-388 0662 for an appointment.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Bayley

Quiet Go the Dons

Notes of a Non-Conspirator by EFIM ETKIND translated by Peter France *Oxford* £5.25

In Russian *intelligentnost* is the opposite of *khamstvo*. Neither word is quite translatable, for both relate directly to several centuries of political and social experience on the part of the citizenry, kinds of experience which we have not had – fortunately for us. *Intelligentnost* is not intelligence but the qualities properly belonging to an intellectual, a category of persons for which again we have no exact equivalent, though we have acquired the word and use it in a pallid and deprecating sort of way. What is involved, as Peter France points out in the preface to his excellent translation, is a combination of decency, taste, love of language and ideas, and a sense of duty towards all moral and cultural values. *Khamstvo* is a bullying and bloody-minded philistinism, an aggressive self-esteem in possessing all the proper convictions. An ominous equivalent is growing among us today, more on the dogmatic Left than in 'reactionary' circles, but the real *khamstvo* is to be found in the Soviet bourgeoisie and those who run the Soviet educational system.

In April 1974 Efim Etkind, a professor of poetics and French literature at the Herzen Institute in Leningrad, was summoned to the Rector's office. Normally a man who ran his baronial fief in not ungenial manner and with a minimum of interference, the Rector was in a state of near-panic. He had been summoned to the 'big house' – KGB headquarters – and told that a decision had been reached about Etkind, and that it was now his duty to set up an Academic council meeting whose function was to reach a totally free and independent decision. This would not be difficult, but for an easy-going man it was bound to be disagreeable.

Etkind had a lecture to give before he went to the office. He was talking about Gautier's *Emaux et Camées*, and about Victor Hugo's *Les Châtiments*, which appeared in the same year, 1853. As an expert on translation and the niceties of poetic technique he had always valued Gautier's seemingly timeless expertise, but now the excitable invective of Hugo, exiled by the officials of Napoleon III, seemed to him as urgent and vital as they were 120 years ago, the slipshod ephemerality of his verses more imperishable than Gautier's chiselled cameos. As he read the lines he felt that his audience thought so too and understood, just as they understood Pushkin's verses in which, under the name of the Italian Pindemonte, he had asserted his independence 'of the Tsar and of the people'.

> In order for them to understand the modern relevance of Hugo's *Châtiments* there was no need for the mutual humiliations of ambiguous allusions and ironical hints. For it was not a question of allusions but of the constancy of historical situations. Karl Marx, rephrasing Hegel, once said that all history repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce. Our experience is different: the repetition is a second and more terrible tragedy.

Etkind's students were no doubt more enthusiastic and more scholarly than the mass audience who at a Pasternak recital had shouted for his translation of Shakespeare's Sonnet LXVI – 'and art made tongue-tied by authority' – but they had the same kinds of impulses and realisation.

It was only two months since Solzhenitsyn had been flown into exile, and that was why the heat was on: that, and the fact that Etkind was Jewish. It is possible that otherwise he might have got away with the kind of outspokenness about the treatment of Russian poets which had been noted with pain in official quarters over a number of years, together with his lack of positive commitment to poetry's shining advance towards the goals of communism. Dons, even Russian ones it seems, are easily embarrassed by imputations of illiberalism, and these were not the days of the Thirties. Only when the directive arrived did something have to be done about Etkind's attitudes, and even so there was no question – either for the victim or for a recalcitrantly loyal colleague – of being sent to a camp: just a question of little matters like housing, promotion, reputation, whether or not one's book would be published and (even more important) distributed.

Etkind's account of the proceedings that resulted in his expulsion from his job and from the Writers' Union, and his subsequent exile, is particularly interesting because of the publicity that such things can now receive from *samizdat* and *tamizdat* (*tam* – 'there' – i.e. publication in the Western press). The Dean, Domashnev, was not only energetically complained to by the students, whom he finally had to swear at and shut up, but found his name and speech broadcast in Russian by foreign radio stations and even beginning to stink among the secretly right-minded back home. It is an excellent sign that a painful dilemma now seems to confront the ordinary Russian salary man who wants a quiet life: he may have to make a choice between the contempt of his colleagues and the displeasure of the establishment – the latter of course still being by far the harder to bear. Reading this account one can hardly help allocating the kinds of behaviour oneself and one's colleagues would display if the same kind of thing were to start to happen here. There might be some surprises, but on the whole it is disconcertingly easy to imagine the ways in which we should each react, and the grounds each would find for doing so.

For Etkind the result was predictable; his 50-odd colleagues were unanimous in chucking him out, and their comments and speeches are in general in a jargon too obvious to be worth a quote. The eldest, Alexandrov, had already been in trouble with the KGB for writing anonymous letters to the Supreme Soviet abusing the regime's behaviour. An incredibly serious charge, one might suppose, compared with those against Etkind, but it had occurred in the halcyon days of Khrushchev, and the offender had been let off with a caution, which now made him doubly anxious not to put a foot wrong again. One of the most bizarre comments came from the head of the Inorganic Chemistry department: 'Etkind should follow Solzhenitsyn – he can write and do what he likes there.' Slight as it is, this remark is the most revealing of all, for it shows a conscious and positive pride in *not* being able to sal and do what one likes. That morale and decency require external constraint is a Russian prejudice, and not necessarily confined to those who live by *khamstvo* – Pushkin himself observed, 'let us have a strict censorship by all means, but not a senseless one'. When Tvardovsky wrote,

> What shall I do with you, my oath?
> Where find words to relate
> How Prague received us in forty-five
> And how in sixty-eight?

he was not flouting the propriety of censorship but insisting that something shameful was being concealed and must be spoken up about. The two are not at all the same thing.

But Etkind's attitudes are far more European, which was no doubt part of the trouble. One suspects the thing that really alarmed the authorities was the report that he had encouraged young Jews to stay and help reform the system, not to become Zionists and emigrate. The attitude that prefers a Russian as well as a communist *strogost* – discipline – is almost bound to be anti-Semitic. Etkind's cosmopolitanism, social and linguistic, cultural and intellectual, may well have been off-putting to even his more enlightened colleagues, because it was a part of his Jewishness. The same thing had happened in the case of the poet Brodsky, accused of being a layabout. One suspects that some Russians even resent their Jews' love of the Russian language. In no other European tongue, so far as I know, have so many poets wholly or partly Jewish written such great poetry; and Mandelstam, Pasternak and Brodsky were all persecuted for it to a greater or lesser degree. *Khamstvo* and communism are bound to dislike the kinds of individual excellence that goes with Jewish achievement.

Etkind's manner is febrile, naturally, but never obsessed. The way he darts about, sowing his narrative in the manner of Swift

Among this week's contributors:

JOHN BAYLEY'S *An Essay on Hardy* was published this month by Cambridge.

ROSEMARY DINNAGE is the author of *The Handicapped Child* (Longman).

HUGH BROGAN is lecturer in American History at the University of Essex.

EDWARD MORTIMER is currently editing a Penguin Special on Eurocommunism.

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or Nabokov with digressions on poetry, linguistics and literary gossip is a constant delight. One must admit the cast of his mind to be far more congenial than that of Solzhenitsyn, whom he admires but does not, we may suspect, feel close to. His students, past and present, are fortunate in him, but it seems likely that the previous ones in Leningrad work a great deal harder than his classes in Nanterre, read more, think more, and are a great deal more devoted in all aspects of their studies. But that is the paradox of tyranny; its challenge can produce a more avid academic response than freedom, its repressions concentrate the mind and teach the young idea how to shoot. That happened once in Russia, and the only hope is that it continues. Etkind thinks it will – he is full of praise for what the intelligentsia still achieves in Russia, in spite of the regime – but now it will have to do so without him.

Anthony Howard

Squashing and Squaring

The Pencourt File by BARRIE PENROSE and ROGER COURTIOUR *Secker & Warburg* £5.90

The Abuse of Power by JAMES MARGACH *W. H. Allen* £5.50

The Pencourt File should be a totally implausible book and in many ways it remains a ridiculous one. Non-*Daily Mirror* readers start here. Two young BBC employees, doing no apparent harm to anyone, suddenly have their lives disrupted by one of them getting a phone call from Harold Wilson's private office. Later the same day they are both received by the former Prime Minister at his then home in Lord North Street. An hour or so later one of them is to be found dancing a jig on the pavement: Woodward and Bernstein, here we come. But it didn't quite work out like that. For one thing 'Woodstein' knew, or at least had a pretty shrewd idea of, what they were looking for; 'Pencourt', by contrast, hadn't got the least notion. In fact, the only thing they initially had going for them was their touching, boyish pride in the fact that a Very Important Person (if lately politically deceased) was actually prepared to talk to them. Not perhaps the best foundation for a serious exercise in investigative journalism – as the BBC, their original sponsors, might have been expected to appreciate.

Probably, though, the temptation to be snooty is best avoided – for, whatever they may have failed in, Pencourt have certainly greatly added to the gaiety of the nation. Their book is easily the funniest thing about the whole Wilson *ménage* since the days of 'Mrs Wilson's Diary' – and, as with 'Mrs Wilson's Diary', the wonderful thing is that it all rings so true. Whether it is the former PM waxing eloquent about himself as 'a big, fat spider', or Marcia Williams excitedly exclaiming 'Harold's eyelids would have dropped off if he had seen this', the hallmark of total comic authenticity is there throughout. Nor is that the only aspect of the book from which it is possible to derive a good deal of innocent pleasure. The whole mutual misconception on which it was based is also somehow richly satisfying. Here, after all, was 'HW' – and Pencourt would have been wiser to stick to that approved nomenclature throughout – deliberately setting out to manipulate the two young journalists for his own purposes. Indeed, even in the presence of Sir Charles Curran, he was perfectly open about it:

> I see it as a slow burner. I imagine a number of leads which might make news items . . . Eventually perhaps a longer film.

'With Harold to the Cape' – one can almost see the gleam in the old boy's rheumy eye. But, alas, it was not to be. As is often the way with these things, precisely the opposite result from that intended was obtained. Pencourt may originally have been hired to rescue Jeremy Thorpe from the wicked clutches of the South Africans, but instead they ended up by thrusting him forward before the accusing glare of 12 million *Mirror* readers. On that basis even Andrew Newton failing to shoot Norman Scott on Bodmin Moor ranks as a master of marksmanship when compared with 'HW'.

The Pencourt File is in itself a botched job from start to finish. Having started off under Sir Harold's protective wing, its authors never quite seem able to muster the nerve to fly the nest. Thus they build into their narrative lengthy accounts of meetings with 'spooks' in Washington – accounts which serve only to emphasise their own credulity. They are, for example, hugely impressed by the ease with which 'Dave', their (CIA?) guide, walks in and out of Senate offices on Capitol Hill. They might have been less impressed had they stayed in Washington a little longer and discovered that that is what everyone does: those offices are there for precisely that purpose. Still, their artlessness is part of their charm – witness my favourite quotation from the whole book:

> Lady Falkender stood up from her rocking-chair and asked the reporters to follow her into the dining-room. 'We can eat now,' she said pleasantly. 'I am sorry but I just can't take you two without food. There's nothing personal, you understand, but it's that you two without food is more than flesh and blood can stand.'

Faced with 415 pages – many amusing but only a few of them at all arresting (if that is not a dangerous word to use) – the reader can all too easily empathise.

James Margach's *The Abuse of Power* has also enjoyed something of a *succès de scandale*. A political correspondent for 44 years (the last 20 of them as the Lobby man for the *Sunday Times*), Margach was widely regarded by leading politicians in both major parties as the trustiest steed in the herd. Maybe that explains 'the shock, horror, outrage' with which the newspaper extracts from his book have been received. Nora, well of course: but Jimmy – surely there could not be that degree of bile in *him*? Yet there was, you know, there was. Beneath that genial Scots exterior, there always lurked a healthy vein of professional self-respect. It would, no doubt, have been better if his commitment to the cause of a free press had been rather more in evidence during the years he was the most 'briefed' journalist at Westminster; but he has certainly made up for that now. *The Abuse of Power* is a first-class defence of press freedom, a necessary primer for any political journalist setting out in the trade. Its actual method of construction – separate essays on 12 prime ministers (11 of whom the author actually watched in office) – may sound unadventurous, even to the point of being pedestrian; but by concentrating solely on the way in which they handled (and sought to subvert) the press, Mr Margach has illuminated many dark and some murky corners.

His text really comes from Lloyd George: 'what you can't square, you squash, and what you can't squash, you square.' In their dealings with newspapers all prime ministers, Mr Margach argues, have tried to do that – though with varying degrees of delicacy and finesse. His respect is reserved for Stanley Baldwin and (at any rate until just before the end) for Harold Macmillan, his affection for Ramsay MacDonald and Alec Douglas-Home, his dislike for Neville Chamberlain and Edward Heath and his outright contempt for Harold Wilson. It was this last and toughest verdict that surprised me most, not because I personally disagree with it ('I saw Tony Howard off with his tail between his legs' is but one characteristic Wilson boast) but because I never expected to read such harshness from the pen of Mr Margach.

He has now, however, put the boot in with a vengeance and Sir Harold's surviving admirers (as was once said of the friends of Randolph Churchill: 'I fear a dwindling band') are reduced to making not very effective protests about the impropriety of Mr Margach's behaviour towards his host: having eaten the former PM's salt, he now throws it back in his face. That is hardly a line of argument which will be found universally persuasive – though there is perhaps a slight lack of consistency in Margach's own approach. I was particularly interested to note that in his moving elegy for Sir Alec he could not bring himself even to mention that the most devastating attack of all upon his hero had been made (on 18 July 1965) by William Rees-Mogg in an article in the *Sunday Times*. According to the *Sunday Times*'s own house history, *The Pearl of Days*, it was 'an article which, it is generally agreed, brought Sir Alec's term as Conservative leader to an end'. But you would never be able to gather that from Mr Margach. The truth, I suppose, must be that there are hosts and hosts – and that the salt at Thomson House must somehow be more sacred than that at Chequers. Or perhaps it's simply that old habits, however hard you try to shake them off, never quite die.

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Mark Boxer

In Waiting

Time and Chance by PETER TOWNSEND
Collins £5.50

In the Forties several public schools, making a token gesture towards egalitarianism, took in a few boys whose parents couldn't afford the fees. With the degree of patronage you might expect, they were called guinea-pigs. Towards the end of the war a similar idea was mooted at court. Equerries, usually chosen because they or their families were known to the monarch, were to be augmented by one or two outsiders with 'good' wars to their credit. The Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal, summoned young Townsend to his office and offered him the job – 'if you don't find the idea particularly revolting.' Townsend's wife in the taxi outside doesn't underplay the scene. She says, 'We're made.'

Early in 1944 Townsend arrived at the Palace for a three-month stint and went straight to bed in his solitary room. 'Survive your first two years at Haileybury,' says Townsend, 'and you could survive anything.' That night a rather curious scene took place which may have reminded Townsend of his earlier dormitory life. Two pyjamaed courtiers flashed their torch at the new boy, using a convenient air-raid as a cover story. (This is not exactly Townsend's interpretation.) In the succeeding months Townsend clearly fell for the King, staying for eight years until he was more or less expelled.

'In waiting' is an accurate job definition; the role is not far from that of a servant, with the added responsibility of having to run a two-way briefing service. Another equerry, describing his job for another monarch, said it was his responsibility to advise nervous tennis opponents to serve to the King's right hand. Townsend progressed so well that when, in the fullness of time, he found himself playing singles with the King, he felt confident enough to deal with royal irritability:

> He [the King] picked up that damned, evasive ball and hit it miles out of court. I thought to myself 'I'm not going to get that one – you are,' and he did.

Heady stuff.

Townsend's account of his early life is pastoral. Cows in particular seem to have played an important part in his development. They even play a crucial role in the acquisition of his last home in France. But possibly the vital encounter was this one in a Devon field when he was six:

> There were cows . . . not nearly as friendly as Mr Bull, whom I always met at such close quarters that I failed to notice the most impressive part of his anatomy. That of the cows, which swung, swollen with milk, voluptuously, between their back legs, I was able to observe at leisure. So impressed was I that when I got home I took my big fluffy ball and . . . stuck it between my legs and crawled to my mother's knee, announcing triumphantly 'I'm a cow'. 'Yes darling' was all she said . . .

The only trouble with this quotation is that it makes the book sound more intriguing and revealing than it is.

The story of Townsend's romance with Princess Margaret is respectfully told. The glimpses we are allowed go no further than the piano stool and the heather. Townsend gallantly doesn't quote her except when she declares her love – this kind of language is catching – and when he shows her a draft of the renunciation. Curiously they follow almost the same line: 'That's exactly how I feel, too,' she says. One of the few revelations of the book is that the line 'I have decided not to marry Group Captain Townsend . . .' was thought up by Group Captain Townsend. Perhaps he wanted to ensure that the press office at Buckingham Palace – about the only outfit he has a bad word for – at least got his rank right.

There are several echoes of the Windsor abdication crisis, not least the Archbishop of Canterbury making a prig of himself. And when the news of their romance first hit the American press, you sense through Townsend's loyal prose the deep embarrassment of the royal family. The Group Captain is asked to dinner; Prince Philip makes some heavy jokes. It is left to Sir Alan Lascelles, the Queen's private secretary, to say later what was clearly thought: 'You must either be mad or bad.' Whatever the royal family said, and they *sound* jolly nice, plans were made, with the connivance of the Tory government, to remove Townsend from the scene as speedily as if he had stepped over an oubliette. Like a good public school boy, Townsend did what he was told.

It was two years before the possibility of a marriage could be finally scotched. Hugh Gaitskell, Townsend's cousin, informed the shadow cabinet that the marriage was on. But according to Townsend, Lord Salisbury threatened to resign from the divorced Eden's cabinet. In the end the decision had to be Princess Margaret's. She could marry but would have to give up her royal functions, rights and income. Giving up the functions would not, I suspect, have been a problem. Royal rights seem rather a strange concept – one hears so much in this line of business about Duty. It presumably relates to the possibility of accession. It has been suggested that the loss of income, in her case the expectation of £15,000 a year on her marriage, was crucial, thus implying the economic interpretation of history can be stretched to include affairs of the heart. A kinder and I think truer explanation exists: the royal mystique has to be indoctrinated from a very early age in its practitioners, and to give up its curious embrace was, as Townsend humbly admits, 'too much to ask of her'.

In the end the die-hards got it right. The job of an equerry is best suited to upper-class figures who are confirmed bachelors. But Townsend was obviously well suited in one other respect. 'Most Englishmen,' he writes, 'have the soul of a butler – it is after all only a desire to serve.' Brought up

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in the shades of Empire, reading *The Story of the Nation* at his father's knee, Townsend clearly swallowed whole the surface propaganda of the public-school ethic: honour, country, service. Driving to an air display with his Haileybury housemaster, Townsend was asked what his favourite word was:

> I had no idea. 'What is yours?' I asked him, and he replied: 'Maintenance.' He explained why, and now 50 years later I still agree with him. Maintenance is a pretty word . . . it connotes love, respect and continued, sustained care and effort.

Few of us, I imagine, would be convinced by our schoolmasters of the abiding attraction of the word. To me it denotes boring, regular attention to boilers. But to retain the concept for 50 years shows something of Townsend's essential innocence and gullibility.

Townsend makes no pretence that his later life has been much more successful in the outside world, except in what is obviously a very happy marriage. He records failures in the wine business and, amazingly, in public relations. He always seems to be taken for a ride. He now is a professional writer and here too the public-school ethos seems to be preserved in formaldehyde: the ocean wave is ploughed, regiments are crack, the night is velvet, mess waiters are imperturbable, loved ones wait, eyes shine like coals, joy is sheer, gardeners are gently spoken, planes handle like women, private parts are fondled. (By a schoolmaster; bad luck.)

Townsend's story reads rather like the account of the innocent heroine of an 18th-century novel, put-upon and manipulated by harsher masters. He has few complaints – except elliptically, in a passage about the village boys of his youth:

> I was made to believe the village boys were beneath me . . . it took me many years . . . to acknowledge that 'village boys' could turn out to be far better men that the highest born in the land.

Hugh Brogan

1776 And All That

The Empire of Reason by HENRY STEELE COMMAGER *Weidenfeld* £12.50

All students of American history owe a debt to H. S. Commager. He is the last of the rhetorical historians: that is to say, throughout a long life of teaching and scholarship he has put his enormous gifts (his learning, his energy, his common sense, his good heart and sharp intelligence) to the task of swaying the emotions of his readers and hearers – to making the study of American history as exhilarating and valuable for them as it is for him. It has been a great enterprise, especially in this utilitarian age, when professors' books are written either to prepare their pupils for exams or to help other professors set them. Professor Commager has a nobler idea.

Effective rhetoric is that which moves an audience; so to judge the success of Professor Commager's latest book involves asking for whom he has written this study of the relationship between the ideas of the European Enlightenment and the achievements of the American Revolution. The answer seems to be: for those of his fellow-citizens, perhaps especially the young ones, who need reassurance about their country's course and character in the wake of Vietnam and Watergate. Professor Commager, who was notable among those on the side of the angels in both cases, cannot offer much comfort where recent crimes, follies and misfortunes are concerned; but he can and does show how admirable and how timelessly relevant were the principles and actions of the Founding Fathers. Presumably he hopes through this recital to do something to restore his readers' faith in American possibilities. He also does something to restore everybody's faith in the possibility of generous and rational democratic politics, and therefore ought to be particularly welcome to British readers wearied by Harold Wilson and Margaret Thatcher.

The Founding Fathers have been celebrated often enough before, of course; but that does not make Professor Commager's undertaking any the less worth while: one of the historian's duties is the restatement of ancient truths when needful. Professor Commager does the job with all his old verve, and with a geniality that occasionally brightens into humour. This book will do earnest young Americans little harm and much good. But (I am sorry to have to add) less innocent readers are much less likely to be satisfied. In fact they may have some very serious complaints.

In the first place, the book does not really hang together. It is true enough that the American Revolution was in a sense the Enlightenment's greatest achievement, and to display it as such is neither misleading nor easy; in fact, it demands exactly Professor Commager's gift for trenchant, informative, rapid writing. It is all the more disappointing that he expounds the Enlightenment itself so inadequately. He only sketches it. 'What is important is not so much origins as consequences,' he says, hurrying on to 1776 and all that. No doubt; but it was he who raised the question, and his answer, frankly, leaves too much unexplained and unexplored. Indeed, he is positively misleading when he says, as he does, that the Enlightenment ended in Robespierre's Terror and Napoleon's betrayal: it would be just as true to say that it has never ended. He should not have written about the intellectual context of the American Revolution if he was not prepared to do so more thoroughly. As it is, he frequently alludes to R. R. Palmer, but does not seem to have learnt much from the example. Palmer tried, with real if partial success, to shape a hypothesis which would account for the nearly simultaneous emergence of reform movements and revolution throughout Europe and the Atlantic world at the end of the 18th century. Professor Commager merely writes off the European endeavour so that he can concentrate on the more congenial task of showing Franklin and Jefferson at work. This is the more unfortunate as the birth of the United States owed a great deal to such non-enlightened forces as New England puritanism; Professor Commager has therefore to devote many pages to topics somewhat remote from his main subject.

Secondly, an Englishman may be excused for noticing that Professor Commager, very much in the spirit of American publicists in the post-Revolutionary period, is given to exalting the United States at the expense of Great Britain. His prejudice against Edmund Burke and his tendency to write as if Tom Paine was born a Yankee may be pardoned as amiable weaknesses, like his punctuation. But it is a serious inaccuracy to state, as he does, that it was the British government alone that kept the Atlantic slave-trade going in the years before 1776 (Jefferson knew better); he should not have dismissed the theory of 'virtual representation' so cavalierly; and he most certainly should not have said that William Pitt responded to the French reign of terror by introducing one in England. Since Professor Commager knows perfectly well that no guillotine ever stood in Grosvenor Square, one can only think that his rhetoric has carried him away.

Perhaps that is the fundamental flaw of Professor Commager's book. Of course the infant US was governed on better principles than England; but there is no need to make the contrast quite so stark. The same forces of social evolution were at work in both countries; only they had much denser material to work on here. That does not justify Professor Commager in calling Britain politically static, any more than it justifies him in playing down the flaws in American society. One would not gather that African slaves made up more than one-sixth of the new country's population (but perhaps a promised second volume will deal with the matter).

Some lesser blemishes must be mentioned. The number of misprints is appalling, even by today's standards, and gives us, among other horrors, such a non-word as érudite (for savant; Fr. *érudit*). The author makes some slips of the pen ('McFingal's Cave', for instance). He is also determined to acclimatise Fr. *philosophe* as an English word with a special meaning by using it repeatedly, unitalicised. He tries to justify this by a long appendix which discusses everything except the fact that *philosophe* is simply the French for philosopher, and usage runs strongly against any alternative meaning, as he proves himself by frequently lapsing from his plan and writing 'philosopher'. But *The Empire of Reason* is still a mine of information; its verve is astonishing; and it tells the story of how democracy was born in North America magnificently. Volume Two will be keenly awaited.

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Maurice Richardson

Binned Sinister

The Bad Bohemian: A Life of Jaroslav Hasek by CECIL PARROTT *Bodley Head* £10

The author of the famous Czechoslovak satirical saga, *The Good Soldier Svejk* (pronounced Shvake, never Shvike), was a curious and interesting person. I've always wanted to know more about him. This, the first full-length biography of him outside his own country, written by a former British ambassador in Prague, is very thorough and informative. It gives you a strong feeling of that peculiar Czech ambience in which efficiency is blended with obliquity. Hasek's own personal atmosphere has been compared to the steam rising from a dumpling stewed in Pilsener.

Hasek's life was like a picaresque novel. He was born in Prague in 1873 and died in 1923. As his chief satirical target was Franz Josef's imperialist bureaucracy and he became a minor commissar in Russia during the civil war, he died, so far as Moscow is concerned, in the odour of sanctity. He remains a hero of communism to this day. *Svejk* is approved reading for the red Czech rank and file in a special edition produced by the official military publishers called *Our Army*. Had he lived longer it might have been a different story: he was a congenital nonconformer and it's difficult to imagine him finding favour in the reign of the Emperor Josef Visarianovich and his satraps.

His father, an alcoholic maths teacher, married the daughter of a water-bailiff (there was one of these for every carp-pond in Imperial Bohemia). Jaroslav was a natural buffoon. Apprenticed to a chemist, he made fireworks and waved the maid's red petticoat out of the window to encourage a demo of striking bakers; dressed up as a cop, he arrested the Rector of the academy where he was supposed to be studying economics. One of his earliest stories was about gypsies lamenting the death of a pet monkey, then deciding its corpse was not too far gone to be cooked. He also started drinking young and was arrested four times in two months for being drunk and disorderly. Alcoholism, against which from time to time he made great struggles, played a strange part in his life; it caused phases of marked physical degeneration yet without seeming to interfere with his talent.

He wrote political satire in fable form, and joined the Anarchist Party (but found it too naïve and too disciplined). In 1906 he steadied down a bit as a result of falling in love with Jarmila, a well-to-do plasterer's daughter whom he married in 1908. He became editor of a family magazine, *Animal World*, and fooled about with stories of elephants playing the gramophone, advertisements of 'Werewolves for Sale', and a 'Cynological Institute' from which he issued forged pedigrees for dogs. In 1911 he tried to throw himself over a bridge and was binned for a few weeks. He also founded a bogus political party, stood as its candidate, and wrote a satirical history of its fortunes. About this time he conceived the character of the Good Soldier Svejk, the permanent member of the awkward squad, with his half-natural, half-assumed imbecility, which was partly a projection of himself. There is something inherently Slav in this cunning zany; the role would be a natural for Peter Ustinov. There were to be three versions of the Svejk saga. The first was written when the Imperial censorship was very severe; the second in Russia, where anti-Austrian propaganda was running strong. The third version – translated by Sir Cecil Parrott for Penguin – was rewritten when Hasek was back in Prague after the war.

The war came when Hasek was in a particularly drunken state, banned from the Prague cabarets for which he had written sketches because he would insist on taking off his boots and making jokes about his dirty feet. He turned out to be a better soldier than might have been expected and won the Silver Medal for Valour before he was captured during Brusilov's breakthrough in September 1915. In Russia he volunteered to join the Czech legion (later to be the subject of much wrangling between the Allies, Masaryk and the Bolsheviks) but deserted from it when the Revolution broke out. Caught between two or more fires, his position was peculiarly Svejk-like and he had to disguise himself as a peasant woman to escape being shot by angry Czech patriots.

During his two years as a Bolshevik propagandist, Hasek moved backwards and forwards between the Volga, the Urals and Siberia. He 'married' Shura, a Russian girl, became a fanatical teetotaller and was at his happiest when writing simple plays for Buryat-Mongols. He seems to have avoided the extremes of conversion and his most aggressive action was to criticise a commissar for drunken arrogance. His attitude to the Revolution wasn't unduly starry-eyed as he showed in his Bugulma stories about communist clowns like Commandant Yerokhymov, though as Cecil Parrott points out he was a strong slavophil and his Bolshevik-mocking is a good deal milder than his anti-Hapsburg satire. Back in Prague early in 1921 he went through another of his abrupt transformations, hit the bottle again, tried to take up with his wife Jarmila, cashed in on the sales of Svejk and went on writing until he died on 3 January 1923 weighing 24 stone.

You can pin all kinds of pathographical labels on him: orally compulsive creative psychopath with clown's escapist syndrome and underlying gynandromorphy. Cecil Parrott has a conscientious try. Jarmila probably hit the nail on the head when she said his basic traits were 'softness, quick changes of mood, immediate acclimatisation, the urge to attract attention'. No doubt about it, he was an original. How does he re-read today? At his best, remark-

This English

No doubts about the £3 token this week. Having tied the reader up in knots with his cliché cocktail, culprit Macrae then deposits him in the swirling hell of his entirely directionless syntax. £2 the field: for a couple of slips by distinguished correspondents to *The Times* (a nasty coinage and another rotten dangler); a ridiculous bit of hyper-correctness in the same journal; and a rare mis-numbering by one of our own distinguished diarists. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Since it is now teetering on the fringe of a vicious circle where poor money supply figures lead to lack of gilt sales which in turn lead to worse money supply figures it is worth asking just how gloomy the market should be. **Hamish Macrae**, *Guardian* (Harvey Cole)

☐ More particularly I believe Professor Gould's pamphlet to be inimicable to the essential idea of a university. **A. H. Halsey**, *The Times* (I. F. R. Spiegl)

☐ They said that, having shown the material to Sir Harold, and having asked him to help them, he had been impressed by what they had discovered . . . **Sir Charles Curran**, *The Times* (J. H. Lawrie)

☐ Even the monk-priest across the supper table from we was still capable of feeling resentment . . . **David Forrester**, *The Times* (Stephen Corrin)

☐ The vanishing of our great industrial achievements take the most surprising and depressing forms. **A. J. P. Taylor**, NS (C. H. Rolph)

An Essay on Hardy

JOHN BAYLEY

Fifty years after Hardy's death, John Bayley suggests a new approach to him as poet and novelist. Rather than concentrate on the ideas, Professor Bayley focuses on the texture of the writing and in particular on the crucial differences in it between one kind of exposition and another. The vital ingredients of eroticism and humour are analysed in detail, as are the unusual ways in which passiveness, pessimism and anthropomorphism function in the novels and poems. A claim is made for the stature of the earlier, less-considered novels and a new reading of *Tess* is put forward. **£6.95 net**

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ably well. He has a genius for comic characterisation and invention and, surprisingly perhaps, he always knows when to stop.

Rosemary Dinnage

Hearth Cases

Web of Violence by JEAN RENVOIZE *Routledge & Kegan Paul* £4.95

'Further research', 'better provision', 'more cooperation': do-gooding verbiage is never in short supply and, as Jean Renvoize says, if words could do it, there wouldn't be an unhappy family in Great Britain. But there are: plenty. About 25,000 requests for help from assaulted wives reached the Citizens Advice Bureaux in 1973. Every year an estimated 3,360 children under four are likely to suffer deliberate injury, of whom 27 will die. Incest – although its overall frequency is hard to guess – is known to social workers in the worst slum districts to be relatively common. Granny-bashing sounds a bit of a joke, but bruised, cowed elderly people admitted to geriatric wards don't raise much of a laugh. And the figures for these various kinds of family violence, where they can be estimated at all, are recognised to be only the tip of the iceberg; nor do they include the middle-class version, verbal cruelty.

Most people's reaction to this morass of misery and original sin is to get angry, or wish it would go away, or – if they are 'professionals' – to reach for their platitudes. Miss Renvoize does none of these things: while summarising with sensitive descriptions of the unhappy people she has met and talked to, she accepts that although there is never going to be enough time, money, intelligence and sympathy available to help them all, there are still modest objectives worth working for. Imagination and realism may be more useful than money in tackling the apparently insoluble, and her book displays both.

Many of the facts she presents are unsurprising. Alcoholism and wife-beating go together; assaulted wives often insist that they have the best husbands in the world 'except when he gets drunk'. Women who batter their children are likely to be depressed, poor and isolated, and to have suffered violence themselves from parents or husband. Violence, in fact, very naturally breeds violence and can be a way of life from generation to generation; this is most observable in 'problem' districts – in suburbia and upwards, violence is more easily kept out of sight. Other findings are less obvious: battering husbands tend often to be, not large beefy bullies, but weak and inadequate men with strong wives on whom they desperately depend; nor does wife-beating have much to do with sexual sadism of the whips-and-chains type.

Jean Renvoize has no particular feminist axe to grind and unlike some other writers on the subject discusses marital violence with balance. Many women *are* repeatedly terrorised without rhyme or reason; but sometimes the attacks may be subtly provoked, or a ritual of attack, followed by repentance, may seem to be positively cherished by both partners. Assaulted women may return to a violent husband, or refuse to take any action against him; the ambivalent, ravelled tie may be very binding. That the facts are complex rather than starkly black and white makes them, surely, more rather than less tragic. The book's opening chapter consists of a harrowing verbatim interview with a girl of 18 who has a child of two, alcoholic parents, four generations of violence behind her, a fractured jaw, broken nose . . . 'What would you do if you met a quiet man, a peaceful man, who never tried to hit you?' asks the interviewer. 'He'd bore me to tears. I like a bit of drama. I love the argument, building up to a fight.' But – 'when the actual beating comes, I hate it. I wanna *die*.'

Miss Renvoize is free from an us-and-them attitude even towards the kind of violence that provokes the most horror, attacks on the helpless – babies and old people. She quotes a moving *Guardian* letter on the strain of caring for an 87-year-old; and she states firmly that 'it is hypocritical to pretend that it is abnormal to want to hit children'. She concerns herself, though, mainly with the build-up to a sudden outburst of frenzy, with which we can all empathise, rather than long-term cruelty to a child, which is as near plain evil as it is possible to imagine. Why do we bother with the emotional problems of violent parents, she quotes a correspondent as asking – why not just send them to prison for criminal assault and take their children away for good? There wouldn't be enough prison space, she answers (though this can hardly be the case for severe offenders, who do seem to get off very lightly in relation to other types of crime); and there certainly wouldn't be enough foster homes for the children. She is nevertheless in favour of more than the present 20 per cent of battered children being removed from home.

She has other practical recommendations to suggest, while fully aware of their inadequacies. The police could be better informed about the protection for battered wives afforded by the Act passed last year; more refuges, offering general advice as well as shelter, should be opened for these women, and more second-stage housing made available; small units might be set up where their husbands could be temporarily sent, to solve their problems more by self-help and discussion than by a weekly psychiatric visit. Self-help groups, for people in trouble of many kinds, are an economical and sensible way of restoring self-respect. For children who have been assaulted, she recommends the appointment in every case of a guardian, to represent the child in court and to be concerned with its welfare rather than with punishing the parents. Finally, she makes a suggestion that would cost nothing but – though it is supported by research – may be dismissed as negligible by those with an investment in doing good by busy-ness: if it were the practice in maternity wards to let mother and baby be together for some time after birth, a stronger and more natural bond might be established which would prevent later perversion of maternal feeling.

Edward Mortimer

Curtain Call

An Autobiography by ABBA EBAN *Weidenfeld* £10

'I am getting tired of repeating all the time that Mr Eban is the best speaker in the Union,' wrote one of Abba Eban's Cambridge contemporaries in an undergraduate paper. The subjects of such tributes seldom get tired of hearing them, but Mr Eban should not be surprised if his readers do by the time they have finished this 600-page book. At every stage in his career he seems to have been beset by encomia. Telegrams fly back and forth across the world praising his 'extraordinary brilliance in thought and expression, powerful cogency of reasoning, dignity of presentation'. Editorials salute him in obscure Midwestern newspapers, and the *TLS* compares him to Cicero. 'It was not necessary to take all these eulogies at full value,' he writes, 'in order to be humanly encouraged.' Quite so, and Mr Eban is certainly not exempt from human vanity. At least he manages not to mention an earlier biography entitled *Eban: One of the Greatest Statesmen of the Century*, but one suspects that he secretly concurs in that judgment.

For 'statesmen' read 'diplomats', and I will readily subscribe. The story of Israel is an astounding success story, perhaps most crucially in military terms but no less so in diplomacy. Indeed, without diplomacy Israel could never have achieved the position of strength from which her military victories were won. It was the diplomacy of Chaim Weizmann which made it possible for Israel to exist at all, for without the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate it would not have been possible for enough Jews to settle in Palestine and build a state there. Eban of course is too young to claim any credit for the events of 1917 – though he recounts proudly that at the age of two he was left without a baby-sitter by his mother at their home in Kennington Park Road when she was suddenly summoned to Zionist headquarters to translate 'an important document', which turned out to be the Great Declaration itself. That is as good a Zionist pedigree as anyone of his age could wish for, and it is fitting that he was later to become Weizmann's most trusted disciple and his true successor – not as leader of the Zionist enterprise (that role of course passed to Ben Gurion) but as liner-up of international support behind it.

Eban's account shows that Weizmann remained indispensable in this role even after his dethronement from the presidency of the Zionist Executive in 1946, and that his own rise to prominence was directly related to this fact: Weizmann was the only Zionist leader to whom various world statesmen (including, at a crucial moment, Harry S. Truman) would listen, and Eban seems to have been the only person through whom Weizmann could bear to maintain relations with those who had ousted him from the

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leadership. It could be argued, of course, that by the time Eban came on the scene no force on earth could have prevented the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. As Ben Gurion used to say, 'it doesn't matter what the *goyim* say; it matters only what the Jews do'.

But it would be over-simple to conclude that the diplomatic struggle was from then on of secondary importance. To impose herself by force Israel needed arms, and diplomacy was crucial in determining her ability to procure them. If anything this factor has become more important with the passage of time, as the sophistication and cost of weapons deployed in the Middle East has steadily escalated. In 1948 Israel could defeat her enemies without any official arms supplies from great powers (though Soviet support facilitated a deal with Czechoslovakia). By 1956 access to major Western arsenals had become almost an obsession for her leaders, and probably did as much as anything to bring them into close alliance with France. Since 1967, of course, Israeli policy has been governed as much by the desire for American arms supplies as by any other factor.

Abba Eban has not had a decisive voice in Israeli policy, even when he was foreign minister, which is perhaps a pity since he is politically both more flexible and more imaginative than most other Israeli leaders. But he has been the constantly persuasive 'voice of Israel' and has been in the thick of all Israel's great diplomatic crises, except of course the present one. Consequently his account is full of absorbing detail; and his prose is readable, if not quite so elegant as four decades of applause have obviously led him to think.

Valentine Cunningham

Demomondaine

Today the Struggle by MERVYN JONES *Quartet* £5.95
You Must be Sisters by DEBORAH MOGGACH *Collins* £4.50
Trash by JOSE AMERICO DE ALMEIDA translated by R. L. Scott-Buccleuch *Peter Owen* £4.95

Today the Struggle is the kind of undauntedly capacious, generation-spanning novel to which British writers of our time seldom nerve themselves. So bulky that the book is a bit of an effort to pick up, it is also so engrossing that it's hard to put down. In it the fortunes of a persistently (often surprisingly) related lot of families are followed from mid-Thirties, through mid-Fifties, to the mid-Seventies. The generations are closely scrutinised, swirling and settling about their points of crisis, the epicentral moments of an apocalypse that's always just coming and never quite does: the Spanish Civil War, the Ban-the-Bomb movement, and the present financial lows. And what happens to the pair of pacifist school-keepers, the Liberal historian, the communist signalman from Camden Town, the peer's daughter, as they, their children, their adopted children, and even their children's children's children take up, discard, or grow through the political formations on offer does make an extraordinarily rich read.

It's bound, of course, occasionally to seem a bit too schemed-for, too shrewdly schematising. The recurring locations (homes and houses, Liverpool Street Station), seasons (Easter, Christmas) and events like picnics all come on naturally enough. A lot, though, does look less excusably pat. Not untypically of our author's contrivings, the daughter of Basil (the historian's son, who flunks Spain) is raped by the yobbish great-grandson of the signalman, and a grand-daughter of Terry (girlfriend of the signalman's son who was killed in Spain) ends up pregnant by the artist who once taught Terry to paint. An affair like Joe's – Terry's Treasury official son – with Caroline, violently radical granddaughter of the peer, looks a put-up job, fixed just to keep another ball or two rolling. Inevitably, not all the events and characters are equally known to the author nor made equally knowable to us. There are some intriguing hops and yawns, and some blank spaces just tarted over with stereotypes; while items put in just for the record (journalist Sophie beds JFK; Mervyn Jones is mentioned) can seem sorely obtruded.

But these are midget grouses. Many of the people are wonderfully believable in themselves – like the Spanish volunteers, like Basil early and last, and Joe, and Vic the TUC functionary and his prissy wife; they are, what's more, placed most convincingly in their time. The set-pieces keep coming off too: the CP branch meeting, the anti-Fascist demo, the Committee of 100 sit-downs. And above all there's the irrefutably steady slide into Seventies apathy, the ironically bleak future that Thirties communists and Fifties protesters never dreamed of, the unending grey of our economic distress. We are, to be sure, granted gang-bangs and PLO bangs, but the bang-up revolution is as far off as ever. No wonder Basil settles – as this novel most feelingly does – for historical consolations.

Much of Deborah Moggach's novel got written, as much of Mervyn Jones's got enacted, in Camden Town, but that's about all they have in common. *You Must be Sisters*, noticeably a first novel, negotiating well-trodden first-novel ground, is less weighty in every way. Still, for all the sense of *déjà lu* that must grip the reader of yet another novel about undergraduate life, this one manages to be warm and witty and even from time to time actually to seem fresh. Having two other sisters to fall back among helps, of course, when the main strand – Laura at Bristol University – gets threadbare. Not that sister Claire's sobering affair with the accountant, and glimpses of little sister Molly's pubescent climb towards acne, rate, for sideshows, as very showy. Laura, though, is racier, taking up with parent-affronting Mac, an ex-art-student, and getting pregnant and all that. En route to Mac, she's involved in a delighting episode with a Wyatt-toting student who can't find his condom in the dark and has to concede his virginity. As sharply observed is Claire's engagement party up the Post Office Tower. Deborah Moggach may not have exploited all the possibilities her novel spots; but she can at least catch family life most achingly bared.

Trash is also a first novel, but from 1928: in fact, we're informed, the most important modern Brazilian novel. Yet readers excited by the translator's talk of innovation into anticipating something along the lines of Borges or even Marquez will be disappointed. Formally innocent, it tells, oh yes, oh dear yes, a story. Admittedly it's a radical story, hotly antipathetic to the harsh conditions among sugar-cane workers and the victims of the interior's frequent droughts. The plantation world is crudely violent: tottering refugees are simply jeered at, labourers are evicted without notice and flogged, oxen and mules are thrashed, murder is both attempted and done over a pregnant daughter, and mill-hands, high on rum, samba frenziedly while hut and forest blaze and government soldiers beat up random victims. The narrative itself is almost as extreme as its people's lives, going in for the killer who has no sense of smell (he once petted a skunk), the night-dress on fire, the photo that crashes significantly to the floor, and – more Hitchcockian yet – the apparently murdered girl who comes back from the dead. Too sensational by half: hardly surprising no one's bothered to wrestle before with what is said to be this novel's intransigent Portuguese.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

O Weird One?

The Cherry Orchard *Olivier*
Privates on Parade *Piccadilly*
The Elocution of Ben Franklin *Mayfair*
An Evening with Quentin Crisp *Duke of York's*

'Worthy' is the killer adjective that has been applied to some efforts at the National lately, and I daresay it will be flung at *The Cherry Orchard* as well. This production, too, is testimony to Peter Hall's latter-day determination not to intrude on the rights of the playwright, not to slant, load or otherwise bias a pristine text. That this respectful approach can lead to a certain dullness will be confirmed by anyone who has endured Sir Peter's slow suffocation of *The Country Wife*, but with Chekhov it is surely much more defensible, since Chekhov himself was the archetypal enemy of the clear-cut and decided, the packaged, stamped and franked. The more open-minded and morally elusive a director of *The Cherry Orchard* allows himself to be, the more justice he's likely to do the play; and justice is, on the whole, done and seen to be done at the National.

Not for Hall the fascinating liberties which Trevor Griffiths and Richard Eyre permitted themselves at Nottingham last year, transforming the principal nobs into rustling spectres, the student Trofimov into a fledgling Lenin, and Chekhov into a paid-up socialist. If anything, his Trofimov errs on the shambling, anti-heroic side. At any rate, Ben Kingsley presents him as a whey-faced swot, his gestures cardboard and cumbersome, his hair a random scattering of scrawny tufts, his voice like that of a crow half-way through puberty. It is a little difficult to credit Anya's rapture at his utopian jabber. 'How beautifully you talk' indeed!

Still, it's a thoughtful performance, and there are several others of more than workaday interest. Albert Finney, for once, manages to be brash, forceful and energetic without becoming monotonous: a florid, overweight Lopakhin roaring and banging his way to what, barring some anachronistic development in medical science, will surely be a fatal heart attack. Dorothy Tutin tremulous and extravagantly gesticulating, correctly diagnoses a skittish, histrionic quality in the mistress of the cherry orchard; and Robert Stephens, again correctly, finds something of the petulant, overwrought child in her brother. It had never before been so apparent to me that the reason the old butler pursues Gayev outdoors with overcoats, and nags him to go to bed early, is that Gayev is himself still apt to act as if he were a not especially precocious 12-year-old: sneering at the local oiks, blubbing at mishaps, constructing imaginary bouts of billiards in his head, beefing and bleating and always depending on others for his security and comfort. And then there's Susan Fleetwood as a fraught and finally distraught Varya, Nicky Henson as Yepikhodov, Helen Ryan as Charlotta, Susan Littler as a Dunyasha, who to some extent justifies the sexual contempt her valet-lover has for her – oh yes, and Ralph Richardson as Firs, a hoary, white-maned dodderer thickly mumbling to himself and (a touch very characteristic of the actor, this) actually giggling vaguely as he settles down on what we know will be his death-bed. 'Silly-billy,' he chunters, and lets an arm flop to the floor.

'Silly-billy' is, as it happens, Firs's verbal hallmark in Michael Frayn's translation, the phrase he comes out with when the snooty Yasha invites him to 'drop dead', at a moment when Elisaveta Fen suggests a cursory 'you're daft' and Trevor Griffiths an eccentric 'up yours, butterballs'. Frayn is unafraid of the odd colloquialism: 'bloke', 'greedy guts', 'I don't give a damn' and a neat 'not losing your temper, O weird one?' where the Fen version can manage only 'but why are you getting annoyed? – you are a queer chap'. He is also aware that too much slang might make us forget that this is a play about social fragmentation *circa* 1900. Indeed, I've only one nit to pick from Frayn's translation, which strikes me as splendidly lucid and alive, and that's at the point when Yepikhodov tells Yasha he's lucky to have been abroad because, according to Fen, 'everything's been in full swing – I mean to say, everything's been going on so long'. Frayn's alternative is a ponderous and mirthless 'everything abroad's been in full constitution for years'. But I've little doubt his version will be acted again and again, and probably in productions finer than this. As it is, you won't get pins and needles in the rump, but you're unlikely to be hugely amused, and I suspect you won't be vastly moved. It is, perhaps, a rather cool and dispassionate justice that Sir Peter Hall has offered Chekhov.

I must preface my revisit to *Privates on Parade* by revealing that I owe my life to Peter Nichols, a pleasant man and, it is clear, a very self-denying one, too. At any rate, he tells me that he somehow resisted the temptation to run me down when, a few days after my cavils about his play were syndicated in the States, I coincidentally meandered on foot in front of his cruising auto: 'Good job for you I wasn't David Storey.' Yes, well, thank you, and let me respond to his forbearance by emphasising how much there's to be said in favour of his picaresque saga of military showbiz in post-war Malaya: it is good-natured, lively, funny, and extremely well acted, especially by Nigel Hawthorne and Denis Quilley, as arrestingly matched a chain of command as Baden-Powell and Mae West. Good job for the world, as well as for me, that Peter Nichols is Peter Nichols. All the same, I have reservations, and one in particular, whose cautious expression won't, I hope, transform this review into a suicide-note. Granted, much of the fun arises from the sheer incongruity of soldiers so unsoldierly that Mr Hawthorne feels obliged to post the order, 'no perfume on guard duty', I still wearied of the double-entendres persistently thrust into Mr Quilley's rouged mouth – 'if there's any more sauce I'll have you on the carpet', and so on – and still felt that the character himself sometimes ventured too far over the frontiers of plausibility. Queen, flaunting, heterosexuals, for the amusement of.

Our local gay lib isn't known for its capacity for self-mockery, but it could afford to be mildly outraged by this capering caricature without leaving itself open to accusations of touchiness. It can't be funny to feel that the expectations that parents smother you with, the roles that convention obliges you to adopt, the clothes that decorum thrusts you into, perhaps even the body that biology has bequeathed you, simply aren't you at all; and, as it happens, the week's remaining offerings recognise the pain of this capsule predicament far more thoroughly than Nichols, who confines himself to the odd, sketchy gesture in that general direction. To be sure, the first half of Steve Spears's *Elocution of Ben Franklin* is entertaining enough, bringing us, as it does, Gordon Chater with pink panties swathing his abundant rump and a cigar jammed between his teeth, a podgy and garrulous poofta doing his bit for culture and enlightenment in downtown Sydney. But the loneliness, the frustration and the edginess are there, too, made no more tolerable by a natural decency that forces the character to resist the blandishments of the male Lolita whose stammer he's been hired to mend; and the play's second half is proof enough that the pressures confronting such men are outer as well as inner, social as well as personal. In fact, we leave Mr Chater in the asylum where his unruly and un-Australian habits have landed him, cramming a fistful of secreted sleeping pills down his wobbling maw.

One need only spend an hour or so with Quentin Crisp's pale, hurt face and tired, lilting voice to know that this isn't an excessively melodramatic image of persecution as it has occurred in our lifetimes. It is, you feel, more than native wryness that fashions his standard reply to death-threats over the phone, 'I can only say, do you want an appointment?' Here is a 70-year-old homo who has concocted a philosophy out of rejection, isolation and defiance. He calls its central tenet 'style', a quiddity to be nurtured, developed, and flourished in the world's face. It could, I suspect, equally well be called idiosyncracy or even individuality. His is a gentle, unemphatic crusade, but a crusade all the same, since his clear object is to provide the vulnerable with armour, to bring self-sufficiency and maybe even pride to those who feel ashamed of what they can't help being. He is an exhibitionist, agreed, but an exhibitionist with scars and a purpose.

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Television

Russell Davies

Fatcats

The BBC's Chinese Week showed signs of real life only as the last rites were being administered to it by *Reporting China* (BBC-2), a discussion in which a committee of experts, or the nearest thing we have to experts, came close to deciding that the whole thing had been a delusion and a mistake. Dr Felix Greene and Julian Pettifer defended their respective films as best they could, Pettifer on the rather apologetic grounds that you might as well see as much of a place as you can, even if you know you're only being shown the good bits, and Greene out of stout loyalty to the Chinese, who have treated him with relative indulgence.

Greene's theme here, as it had been in his rare but very naïve film *Tibet – Roof of the World* (BBC-2), was that things had been so awful before the present regime that it would not be fair at this point in history to go on about the hardships and limitations still prevailing. Opposing this most extremely was Professor Edward Luttwak, one of those Kissingeresque Americans whose scorn of all things collective threatens constantly to dissolve into neo-McCarthyite apoplexy. His performance was not significantly short of obnoxious, but his view of China – which seemed to be that it is a kind of vast labour-camp where everybody doubles as prisoner and guard – was not one that Chinese Week had thrown out of the window.

Even in Pettifer's report of happy-happy successful agricultural workers (an exhibition commune displayed for PR purposes, as it was sadly agreed) there had been no sign that the Chinese have any prospect of standing outside their own situation and considering how it might be made different instead of merely better. Their noses may be raised from the grindstone a bit more often than in pre-Mao days, but their eyes do not deviate from the life-task set out before them. And this, evidently, is the curse of the resident China-watcher: he fears he is understood even more imperfectly than he is understanding. I fancied I caught in the faces of Peking correspondent Philip Short, and David Bonavia of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, a look of unwilling but ingrained shame, as of a man who has had to become used to being identified as a totem of incorrectness and decadence. Perhaps this very look is a sign of the onset of inscrutability.

For its own contribution to international understanding, Granada sent the comedian Bernard Manning in the opposite direction, to see how he would make out in Las Vegas. First, Manning the pear-shaped had to get out of bed, and we saw him laboriously accomplish this feat in vest and underpants, which it was quite easy to believe he had spent the night in. Once on his feet, however, he uncorked the familiar stream of insults, racial jibes and other all-in-fun-folks objectionabilia that go to make up his humour. 'California here I come!' carolled he, to a captive audience of Mancunian well-wishers at his own Embassy Club.

Las Vegas is in Nevada, but nobody bothered to point that out to Bernard on either side of the water. Everyone was busy worrying that our man would be simply too too tripe-and-cowheels for the ghastly rhinestoned gamblers of Rouletteland. But there was no cause for concern. The gig was a good deal less authentic than the average Esther Rantzen *Big Time*; it had the air of a put-up job. Manning was not really being employed at all, but indulged, as a curiosity, for one performance only. The hall was by no means full, and the proceedings had something of the deathly air of Sunday afternoon, after the pubs are shut. Bernard, give him his due, did not shrink from peddling some of the more soiled of his wares. 'Didn't see you till you smiled,' he remarked to a coloured customer in the front row. I have to admit that Manning's awful piggishness, his utter refusal to contemplate the higher human motives (except in song, where he suddenly commits himself with fervour in an ambitious voice), does quite often make me laugh; but that doesn't stop me eagerly awaiting the day when some strappingly impetuous black brother – or possibly a crazed rabbi – rises from the stalls, leaps on the stage, and dumps the vicious sentimentalist on the seat of his fat trousers. In Vegas this did not occur. They liked him, or so we were supposed to think. A vox-pop microphone was on hand to record approving comments as the people filed out of the Celebrity Room of the MGM Grand Hotel. So ended what the front of the *TV Times* had called 'My Great Gamble': and what I would call a very nearly fraudulent vote of mutual self-confidence between Manning and Executive Producer John 'The Comedians' Hamp.

The real Triumph of the Fatman came on the BBC-2 late-night darts series, *The Embassy World Professional Darts Championships*. This was fronted by David Vine – always the man they pick when there's nothing much else to do about a game except enthuse – and featured a number of quite strikingly villainous-looking champions. The American maestro Nick Virashkul turned out to be a brilliantined Filipino type, slick and sharklike; in a film you would have recognised him instantly as the obvious killer. The English champion, John Lowe, was the unsmiling contender. Only when he had disposed of an opponent completely did he crack a grin, whereupon a truly forbidding crescent of glistening Stonehenge teeth exploded into view.

Improbable darts were played by all, and the speed of the mental arithmetic (largely a matter of habit) frequently defeated the camera-crews and vision-mixer. By the time they all realised that Wales's own Leighton Rees needed only a bull's-eye to finish, the dart had usually hit the spot already, leaving the camera floundering and zooming in a rather effective parody of disbelief. Leighton Rees, an imposingly re-inflated Reg Prentice with a sense of humour, 'ran out' the winner, though his bulk, vastly emphasised by a tent-like red smock shirt, rather worked against that phrase. One's abiding impression, however, was of a voice: that of referee Sid Dowson. I shall not quickly forget his much-amplified cheerleading cries of 'One hundred and FORTEE!', though I am trying.

The girls continue to outshine the men on *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (BBC-2). Janet Maw, as the daughter, is a very pleasing find, and Anna Massey is far too formidable for poor Mr Farfrae. *Men of Ideas* (BBC-2) took another dive with Heidegger. Professor William Barrett scarcely ever got going, and was careful to drop in the information that he'd just arrived and was suffering from jet-lag and culture shock. But the amiability average of these philosophy profs is amazingly high, I must say, and it is unlikely to dip this week, either, when Wittgenstein is done over by Anthony Quinton – or, as he genially announces himself on *Round Britain Quiz*, 'Enthony Queenton-in-London'.

Art

John Spurling

Feeling Good

Robert Motherwell: Paintings and Collages 1941-77 *Royal Academy* and *Knoedler Gallery*

'Painting that does not radiate feeling is not worth looking at. The deepest – and rarest – of grown-up pleasures is true feeling.' The word feeling crops up constantly in Robert Motherwell's writings on art, though not in the sense of aestheticism, which is the 'means for getting at the infinite background of feeling in order to condense it into an object of perception'. The question posed by the retrospective of Motherwell and the small supplementary exhibition at the Knoedler Gallery is whether his paintings practise what his writings preach.

There are, to begin with, the collages. Motherwell has always been a dab hand at them and their technique informs even the pure paintings. Unlike Schwitters's collages – crowded with the apparently random debris of waste-paper baskets or pavements – Motherwell's are spacious, delicately organised settings in paint of a single item: a flattened cigarette-packet, a bit of wrapping-paper with its address-label and foreign stamps still adhering, a fragment from a musical score. The item becomes, as it were, the solo instrument in a concerto, so that one explores the sonority of a torn

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edge, a crumpled surface or the lettering of a brand-name against the quite different sonority of, for example, washes of orange and brown paint melting into one another inside a broken black outline, on a ground of blue and grey stripes. This particular collage, whose solo instrument is a blue and white packet of Jules Destrooper *pains d'amandes*, is called *Proust's Room* and is a characteristic blend of humour, urbanity and cultured knowingness, shading into nostalgia (for Matisse perhaps as much as for Proust). Undoubtedly there is true feeling in the collages but it is not quite of the order Motherwell writes about – you are pointed to the real object, the trophy, and asked to share its associations, as a more conventional traveller might show you his slides.

Another device by which Motherwell short-circuits the question is his use of titles. They are often so exact, so sharply chosen, that they do half the paintings' work for them. Consider *In Forest Green, with Woodwinds* – just the title. Haven't you already received a feeling? You will not substantially improve on it by looking at the painting, though it's a pretty one, black, grey, white and dense green with two freely-drawn charcoal circles superimposed. You may stand in front of it and think you hear the sad sound of the *cor au fond du bois* (for this is definitely a French forest), but suppose it had been called *Untitled no. 96*? In spite of their first, stark impression and their infinite, insistently hand-made variations in size, structure, colour-relation and brush-strokes, such paintings are really illustrations to the plangent overtones of the title rather than self-sufficient visual discoveries.

Where Motherwell does venture into pure abstraction, he is apt to get caught in his own awareness. *A la Pintura no. 12* is an enormous canvas, all red except for a superimposed rectangular charcoal outline at the top and a single calligraphic charcoal stroke displayed (as if in its own glass case, for the connoisseur's inspection) on a feather of unpainted canvas. Like the five panels called *The Blue Painting Lesson*, another blue canvas called *Blueness of Blue* and another huge red one, *Phoenician Red Studio*, which has two hieroglyphs displayed in the same precious manner, *A la Pintura* has the air of an exercise, of being the equipment for radiating feeling without actually doing so. Certainly one feels in the presence of a deep respect for the craft of painting, but it is alluded to, not communicated.

Some of the earlier, smaller paintings do meet Motherwell's own standard – especially the earliest of all, *The Little Spanish Prison* of 1941, and *The Black Sun*, painted in 1959. They are quite unlike one another, the first a sunny, flowing arrangement of yellow and white vertical stripes with a slightly ominous little red crosspiece in the top left-hand corner, the second a heavy black splodge flung on to the paper and then washed around with white, but they both suggest a compressed energy, as if all the painter's feelings were still surging together. But these feelings, about Europe, about democracy, about painting, once separated and teased out – homage to this, elegy to that – begin to seem more like topics for pleasant conversation than the meaning of a life. A passion for civilisation has dwindled into a set of civilised passions.

Films

John Coleman

He Stoops

The Devil, Probably (X) *Camden Plaza*
Effi Briest *Gate Cinema Club*
Pressure (AA) *Coronet, Notting Hill Gate*
ABBA: the Movie (U) *Warner West End; Classic, Oxford Street; ABC, Fulham Road*

It seems long ago that the heart went out of Robert Bresson and his works. Looking back, one wonders if it was ever there. By 'heart', I signify the conventional things: people, guts, the potential for illumination, the capacity to enjoy, the sense that going on is better than stopping. Bresson, at just over 70, has made his bleakest film to date: a wintry summa. *The Devil, Probably* earns its title from a remark passed in a bus by someone briefly glimpsed, tugged into a mild, improbable dispute through overhearing a conversation between two young men. These – Charles (Antoine Monnier) and Michel (Henri de Maublanc) – are engaged in debate, and more notably Michel, about the government's failure to think ecologically. Charles, the piece's absolute centre, is pretty mute here and tends to be absent throughout, yet another of Bresson's walking dead. He is your classic drop-out, found killed at the beginning via a newspaper headline or two, lank locks falling around a nothing face, to be trotted along Bressonian tracks (or tracts) in the prolonged flashback that is the elegant, somnolent movie. He is shown acquiring women, including Michel's, as if by some eerie *droit de seigneur*; he easily outfaces a psychoanalyst, called Dr Mime, simply because the poor doctor is given idiot dialogue; he is always above the game. And the game is life. Bresson, of course, wrote the occasion and Charles might be reckoned to be his spokesman. There is certainly enough interview-evidence to support this.

As usual, the director shoots an abnormal amount of images at around waist height, so that there is a feeling either of something missing (mouth, eyes) or of stooping; one gratefully waits for the ordinary, expressive bits of a human to come into frame. Elsewhere, there is heavy concentration on the unimportant: lifts, fragments of a bus, a vacuum cleaner. Presumably, and how one returns with pleasure to memories of Bresson's 1956 *Un Condamné à Mort*

Ted Hughes

Grouse-Butts

Where all the lines embrace and lie down
Roofless hovels of turf, tapped by harebells,
Weather humbler.

In a world bare of men
They are soothing as ruins
Where the stones roam again free.

But inside each one, under sods, nests
Of spent cartridge-cases
Are acrid with life.
Those dead-looking fumaroles are forts.

Monkish cells, communal, strung-out, solitary,
They are the front-line strategy of a war nearly religious –
Dedicated
To the worship of beautiful guns.

A religion too arcane
For the grouse who grow up to trust their kingdom
And its practical landmarks.

I see a hill beyond a hill beyond a hill
Cries the hen-bird, with imperious eyes,
To her bottle-necked brood.
I see a day beyond a day beyond a day beyond a day
Cries the cock.

Too late, heads high and wings low
They curve in from heaven –
With a crash they pitch through stained glass
And drop onto a cold altar

Two hundred miles away.

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s'est Echappé (where the detail made attentive sense), these inanimate items are there to point up the already obvious: young Charles, a stand-in for contemporary man, is a prisoner of a mechanised environment and can break out only by buying his oblivion: which is what he finally chooses to do, getting a junkie pal to do him in. Strong stuff, and – planted out in the film – there is stronger. A baby seal clubbed to death, a massacre of trees, a deformed infant from Minamata: all these are presented as roughly of the same emotive calibre and shoved at the spectator as plausible reasons for Charles's despair at about the same strength. It won't wash, I fear. What keeps some of us active is our capacity to make distinctions and wet Charles, in the nicest high-art way possible, is beyond such everyday tactics. He is assuredly beyond me. What isn't – and it is almost a return to the old, good Bresson of amazing grace – comes in a swift moment when Charles is en route, with the junkie, to 'suicide'. The camera rests shortly on a black-and-white TV set as the couple make their way to the Père-Lachaise cemetery and the finale; there is a tiny burst of Mozart between shutters, a whiff of life, and it makes one yearn for the Bresson who didn't force us visually to stoop so that he could conquer an obsession.

Other voices, other papers: and my esteemed colleague, Derek Malcolm, caused a stir at last year's Berlin film festival when he and the German director Rainer Werner Fassbinder walked out of the jury-box to register a protest about this not being awarded the Golden Bear. It takes, as you might say, all sorts. Meanwhile, we have Herr Fassbinder's *Effi Briest*, first shown at Berlin in '74, and quite the most available film of his I have yet to see, though fairly dull. It has impeccable credentials, apparently, being drawn with some care from a highly respected German novel, Theodor Fontane's work of the same name, written in 1895 when he was 76. The story concerns a stifled young woman committed to marriage with a serious stick of a bearded, rising politician twice her age; like Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina, she rebels in her fashion. It turns out to be slumbrously in Hanna Schygulla's portrayal: all corkscrew curls and merry on a swing at the outset, she is seen to react slowly, coming to grief over chilly-looking seaside picnics with a handsomish major (no one is *really* superlooking in Fassbinder's films, which conceivably does him credit). The errant wife's hair gets straighter and her untamed manners less flighty as she gives birth, her husband – years later – disowns her and she moves towards a sad, predictable end, a victimised little madam who never realised what she was up to.

Fassbinder does this in neo-Brechtian style over two hours, by which I take it I mean he keeps one at a distance, yawning now and then. It is in black and white and admirably photographed by Jürgen Jürges; it employs a fairly interesting editing technique of flare-out fades, the picture suddenly bursting into white before disappearing, as it were; it uses voice-over to the hilt, behaving a little as if it were a Greek tragedy. The hushed voice *I* appear to have adopted maybe indicates something. For a Fassbinder, *enfant terrible* of the German cinema and a terrible child, to boot, at times, it is incredibly respectful, safe, devoted. It is all a shade too steady to be true, in retrospect, as if he were out to prove he could do the correct thing when summoned.

Retrieval week, and Horace Ové's *Pressure* mercifully re-emerges from a showing at the 1975 London Film Festival. Co-written by the director with Samuel Selvon, this is a staunch, erratic red-eyed stare by Trinidadians at the way it is to be black in Ladbroke Grove. An intelligent English-born lad, Tony (Herbert Norville), leaves school to find himself confronted with prejudice from all sides: job-hunting, dealing with his shouting, subservient mum; coping with his Black Power elder brother, Colin (a raunchy performance from Oscar James). Some of the dialogue and some of the appearances are frankly not up to scratch professionally, and there is a redundant dream-sequence; but this is a remarkable happening, nonetheless, and everyone within calling distance is urged to pay a visit. It is nearly physically painful at times to a degree the Bresson never approaches. As for the palindromic *Abba*, well, able was I ere I saw . . . This is a Swedish group touring Australia. They sing a lot of ditties, rather as if they were trying to do the whole Eurovision Song Contest solo or quartet; there is a stupid sub-plot about a disc-jockey on their trail and just missing them; it will make money.

Weekend Competition

No 2502 **Set by Noah**

Funny, isn't it, how well-known poets often have quite ordinary names – smart, burns, pope, dry den, fuller, hardy, etc? So if we were to ask you to write a sonnet, by 3 March, with one such name in each line, we're sure you'd find it no sweat.

Result of No 2499 Set by Joyce Johnson

We asked you to write an acrostic on NEW STATESMAN; the subject was up to you.

Report **by Little Keith**

One of the things about Emily Dickinson which most people forget is how far ahead of her time she was, and how relevant she still is today. Let those doubters among you consider the lines

> Water makes many beds
> For those averse to sleep

– penned, oh, at least a century before modern slumberware developments. I was reminded of this by a wonderful double album of readings from her poetry and letters by the incomparable Glenda Jackson (Argo ZSW 600/1). If only more of you could write like Miss Dickinson, then perhaps I might be able to conclude, like her, 'My acre of a rock/Yielded grape and maize'. In a way, it's *nostra culpa* for not giving you a more particular subject; but even so, just the six pounds each. Comp-party fever keeps climbing: in Lincoln's Inn Fields – *seppuku*, self-immolations, the lot. The list isn't finalised yet. Mr Keats is at his most enigmatic and remote. Sometimes, in the hushed lower floors, we can hear the explosive snap of his powerful fingers, as some name is considered, weighed, vetoed. Will we see you next week?

'NS Comps are well worth winning,'
E. O. Parrott mutters grinning.
with the unknowns heading spike-wise
sharpless (Stanley J.) thinks likewise;
Tim O'Dowda, Hamill, Ransome –
All have coined it fairly handsome:
This, a fact observed by new boys,
Each time Keats doles out the blue boys.
Some, unwisely, slur his choices,
'Men' are sent to quell these voices.
As for next week's Complex rave-up –
No one's asked who ever gave up.

TIM HOPKINS

November was the cruellest month
Every week ending with my not winning.
with witless insinuations about typing
still I kept on trying
Trying and partly trying,
And not even any goodwill at the festive season,
To wit, a partridge in or out of a pear-tree;
Even Fat Jeff got some cast-off socks.
Surely names used in judgments should
be rewarded.
Me, I am the weekly butt, the fool,
And I have modelled the Complex in wax
Now I shall be glad of another party.

E. O. PARROTT

Nubile women leave me cold,
Eating seems a dreadful bore,
wine has lost its stranglehold,
singing makes my tonsils sore.
Turner, Hockney, Britten, Brahms –
All have lost their magic touch;
Tempted once by loving arms,
Even once a week's too much.
senile – but I can't be sure;
Maybe spring has come too late.
Ah, I think I know the cure –
No more sodium glutamate!

F. R. VESS

North Humberside my theme – one half
of a pseudo-county:
Essentially still Yorkshire, dour but
oddly jaunty –
with Hull its windy capital: gulls and
docks and trawlers;
Salt and soggy fish-and-chips; beer-sodden
soccer brawlers –
That's how Southern softies see us:
philistine, uncouth.
An eye unpreconceited might find a larger truth:
There's 'The Land of Green Ginger'
(true); moon-shot Holy Trinity,
England's greatest parish church – its
vault a stone infinity.
Staid the folk yet forthright, generous
but frugal –
Many of us workers at Rank, Hovis
and McDougall;
And Philip Larkin too, of course – still
arm-in-arm with Toad,
Nibbling crumbs of bitter cheer in
Cemetery Road.

JONATHAN FERNSIDE

No – this is not for you, the casual comp-man,
Eager to make a tax-free buck or two
With some slick gag or quick-fire epigram –
some dirty wisecrack thought up in the loo –
This is for none but the committed fans,
Ames damnées, those who, wrestling night
and day
To meet th'acrostic's downright discipline,
Endlessly sweat to make it sound OK.
see how – initial problems overcome –
My Muse, helpful as ever, quickens pace,
And oh, what inexpressible relief
Now we've bulldozed the last line into place!

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 71 **Results at the Hoogoven**

The 1978 Hoogoven's tournament ended in a victory for the Hungarian GM Lajos Portisch with 8/11. In second place was Viktor Korchnoy with 7½, then Andersson (Sweden) 6½, Ree and Timman (Holland) 6, Panno (Argentina) 5½, Miles (England), Mecking (Brazil) and Najdorf (Argentina) 5, Sosonko (Holland) 4½, Kavalek (USA) 4 and van der Sterren (Holland) 3.

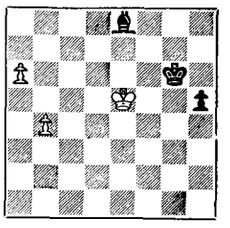
After his victory over Spassky Korchnoy started favourite and his failure to win was due basically to a sensational loss to the tail-ender van der Sterren (see next week's column) late in the tournament. However, Portisch played very steadily and well throughout and deservedly took first place.

The Dutchman Hans Ree made his first GM result, without defeat – a remarkable achievement in such a strong tournament. My own performance was verging on respectability until a pathetic last round loss to Korchnoy. My main accomplishment was to consistently get good positions with white but fail to convert them into points. Take, for instance, the following example of how to not-quite-beat Portisch.

White: A. J. Miles **Black: L. Portisch**

1. P-QB4, P-K4; 2. N-QB3, N-KB3; 3. N-B3, N-B3; 4. P-K3, B-N5; 5. Q-B2, 0-0; 6. N-Q5, P-QR4?! Presumably intended as an improvement on the usual 6. . . . R-K1 but it doesn't turn out that way. **7. P-QR3, B-K2; 8. P-Q4, P x P; 9. P x P.** White's greater central control gives him some advantage. **9. . . . R-K1; 10. B-K3, B-B1; 11. B-Q3, P-KR3.** And this gives him a clear target. My first reaction was to play 12. 0-0-0 and think later, but then I noticed the idea of 12. P-KR4 and N-N5 and decided that 12. 0-0-0 was an unnecessary delay. So **12. P-KR4!? B-Q3!** Probably the only move! Now I realised that 12. 0-0-0 would have been tremendous: 12. . . . P-Q3; 13. P-KR4! or 12. . . . B-Q3; 13. P-KN4. **13. 0-0-0, N x N; 14. P x N, N-K2.** White is still better and there may be a winning plan somewhere, but, if so, I failed to find it. **15. B-R7ch, K-B1; 16. B-K4, P-QB3; 17. Q-Q2, N x P; 18. B x N, P x B; 19. B x P, Q-B3; 20. B-K3, Q-B4; 21. P-R5!** The only winning try. **21. . . . R-R3; 22. Q-Q3, Q x Q; 23. R x Q, R-B3ch?** Better 23. . . . B-B2 or B-N1. **24. K-N1, P-B3; 25. N-R4, K-B2; 26. N-N6** (?!). Probably 26. N-B5 is more critical but I did not like the line 26. . . . B-B1; 27. P-R6, P-Q3! 28. P-R7, B x N; 29. P-R8=Q, B x Rch with a lot of play for black. **26. . . . P-N3; 27. B-B4, B-R3; 28. R-Q2, B-QB5.** Suddenly black's 'bad' bishop is very good, added to which I was in serious time trouble. **29. B x B, R x B; 30. N-B4, P-QN4; 31. K-B2!?** I was frightened of having my king trapped in the corner, but this isn't too good either. **31. . . . P-R5; 32. K-B3, R-B3; 33. K-N4, B-N6; 34. P-R6** Desperation. **34. . . . P-N4?** 34. . . . R-QR1 wins. The main line is 35. P-R7, R-B5ch; 36. K x P, R-N1ch; 37. K-R6, R-B2! 38. R-B2! R x R; 39. P-R8=Q, R x Q; 40. R x R, R x BP. **35. P-R7, R-KR1** Not K-N2; 36. N-N6. **36. N-K2, K-N2; 37. R-QB1(!) B-B5; 38. R-KR1, R x P; 39. R x Rch, K x R; 40. N-B3, R-B1; 41. R-Q1 Draw agreed.**

Problem 71



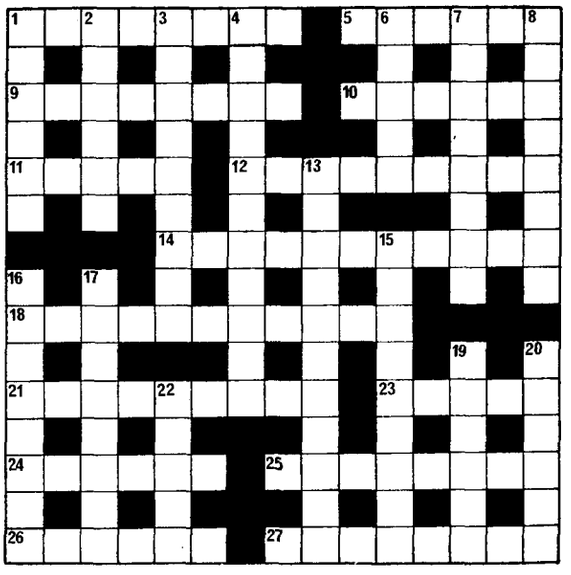
Black to play continued 1. . . . B-B3. Is this (a) Accurate, (b) Adequate or (c) Nonsense, and why? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 1 March.

Solution to Problem 69

Yes. 1. B-B5!! P x B (if 1. . . . P-B3; 2. B x Pch, K-Q1; 3. B-B7!); 2. K-B5! followed by K-Q6 wins, e.g. 2. . . . P-B3; 3. K-Q6, R-B2; 4. R-R8 mate or 3. . . . R-N1; 4. K-K6, K-B1; 5. K x P(B6) etc.

Weekend Crossword 1253

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1253, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 28 Feb.



ACROSS

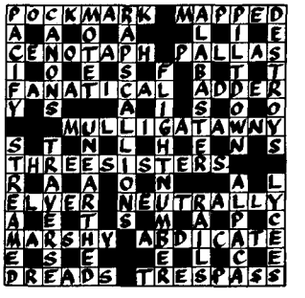
1. To turn Oriental perhaps is doubly nice (8).
5. Plant for an animal to pinch (6).
9. One has the letters, but it puts one's First Class at stake (8).
10. Where to try to get money out of lawyers (6).
11. Game in which Henry gets a degree (5).
12. This part of London would be capital if it didn't include a street with a politician in it (9).
14. Transport for each is ordered in their jobs (11).
18. A branch of zoology is a girl's favourite science (11).
21. Small body with many members (9).
23. How names may be found in the averages (5).
24. Going slow as two fish (6).
25. Speech to help being returned by the people (8).
26. Worker occupied in making as many calls as possible (6).
27. Hero of Keats and Disraeli (8).

DOWN

1. Bandage a man after a sharp blow (6).
2. Part of body which goes very soft in the river (6).
3. Fruit which forms as a cancer on another? (9).
4. Instrument which makes Tom manage on a broken set (11).
6. Borders in America but seldom crossed (5).
7. Aristocratic quality makes the superior person not so much an egghead (8).
8. Not hell although is included in what soldiers have to do (8).
13. Old woman held by strangely simian islander (11).
15. Lack of proportion potentially doubled my rates (9).
16. Carol about wine which is scandalous (8).
17. Disputes which arise from views on the mystery of the organism? (8).
19. Island which has a success in half the time (6).
20. The king enters as a writer — it is James's character (6).
22. Ancient place in a nation I admire (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1251



Prizewinners to No 1251

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For the London and Home Counties Area vacancy interested persons should write for an application form to the:
Area Secretary, Association of Professional Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff (APEX), 3 Parkview Road, Welling, Kent DA16 1SZ.

For the Midland Area appointment interested persons should write for an application form to the:
Area Secretary, Association of Professional Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff (APEX), 90 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8NF.

APEX

In both cases completed application forms should be returned to the Area Chairman at the appropriate address above to arrive not later than the first post on Friday 31 March 1978. The envelope to be marked in the bottom left hand corner **'Area Organiser'.**

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Richard Austin, Chairman, Rodinglea Housing Society, 279 Manor Road, London E15. 01-474 1859.

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Further information, including research and teaching undertaken in the Department, Staffing, enrolments, details of application procedure, superannuation, travel and removal expenses, housing assistance and conditions of appointment, is available from the Registrar of the University or from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF. All correspondence (marked "Confidential") should be addressed to The Registrar, The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria, 3052, Australia.

Applications close on 21 April 1978.

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The Fellowship is open to all published creative writers residing in the United Kingdom (although preference is given to writers resident in the Greater London region). Letters of application, which should include details of publications and any relevant experience, should be sent to:

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GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt. Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836. 18 & 19C prints by Gericault, Buhot, Helleu. List on request and lithographs by Moore, Whiteley, Lowry.

THE THIRTEENTH ST JAMES'S Antiques Fair, next week, at the Piccadilly Hotel, Piccadilly, London W1. Open 2.30 p.m. to 8 p.m. first day, Monday, then 11-8 dly until Saturday.

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Meetings

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Professor Richard Freeman of Harvard University will give the fourth Barnett Shine Foundation Lecture in the Physics Lecture Theatre, Queen Mary College, Mile End Rd, London E1, 5.30 p.m. THURSDAY, 2 MARCH 1978. Admission free

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. Admission free. 21 Feb. 'Egyptian Archaeology and University College' by Professor H. S. Smith; 23 Feb. 'Cops' (Buster Keaton Classic).

SHAW SOCIETY. Friday, 24 February. Barry Morse, Actor and TV Star, with Mrs Morse on 'Everybody's Social What's Not'. Conway Hall, WC1. Coffee 6.30 p.m. Meeting, 7 p.m.

YOUNG SOCIALIST Medical Association are holding their first policy-making meeting on 21 Feb., 9 Poland St, W1, 7.30 p.m. All welcome, entry free.

BUDDHISM IN LONDON. Details: British Buddhist Assoc. 242 5538 (office hrs).

YOGA LECTURES on Inner Peace are continuing at 16 Great Russell St, every Thurs. at 7 p.m. until 16 March. Short group meditation is always included. Adm. free. Details: Shanti Sadan, 29 Chepstow Villas, W11.

CHINA AND HER MINORITIES: 'The Case of Tibet'. Speakers: Neville Maxwell, Chris Mullin, John Gittings. Wednesday 22 February, 7 p.m. at Friends House (Small Hall), Euston Road, NW1. Adm. 50p. Society for Anglo Chinese Understanding, 152 Camden High Street, NW1. 485 8236.

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is the title of a conference organised by National Heritage at West Dean College, Chichester. It's residential (full board and lodging Friday night to Sunday lunch is £25 per person) — but *it's also in easy reach of London* if you prefer to come by the day.

Conference Chairman is James Bishop, Editor of The Illustrated London News, and many prominent museum people are on the panels.

Applications should be sent to Museum Interface, National Heritage, 8 Queen's Ride, London SW13 0JB.

'EFFEMINACY AND HUMOUR', talk by David Porter. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 19 Feb. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY Rally to celebrate 2 historic events: 40th anniversary of founding of the Fourth International and 2nd anniversary of the Trotskyist daily paper 'News Line'. Speakers include Vanessa Redgrave, Cliff Slaughter and Michael Banda, Gerry Healy (WRP), Simon Pirani (YS) with Larry Cavanagh, Terry Beckwith, Jack Stones and Roy Garmston. Chairman Alex Mitchell (News Line) at Wembley Conference Centre, tube Wembley Park. Starts 3 p.m. Tickets £1, youth, unemployed, strikers 50p. from WRP, 21b Old Town, Clapham SW4.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY, 22 Feb. 7.30 p.m. Eric Heffer on 'Socialism and The Labour Party'. Committee Room 11, House of Commons. All welcome.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Sq., London SW1. Sat. 18 Feb. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 21 Feb. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 22 Feb. 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture 'Foundations of Metta', Ven. Silanda. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers: Sun. 19 Feb. 8 p.m. 'Reincarnation — A Necessity'. S.a.e. free pamphlet, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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